Japanese Art Motives

Maude Rex Allen

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SHO-CHIKU-BAI

THIS GROUP OF JAPANESE PLANT FORMS CONSISTS OF THE PINE, THE BAMBOO, AND THE PLUM. SEE PAGE 3.

39027

Japanese Art Motives

by

Maude Rex Allen

Illustrated

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TO

MY DAUGHTER

INTRODUCTION

It is scarcely possible for one to escape the fascination of the art objects of the Orient. The beauty of form and lavishment of color arrest the attention, and the effect produced is not diminished by a certain sense of strangeness which never quite yields to the influence of familiarity. One discovers, after a time, that some part of this sense of strangeness is due to the character of the designs or motives. We adapt the objects to our own uses, whatever the purpose for which they were originally intended, but the pattern and decoration remain, suggesting ideas and a mode of thought alien to our own. Eventually, one realizes that all these quaint figures have a meaning, and are introduced of set purpose and in highly conventionalized groupings. Nevertheless, questions addressed to the oriental shop-keeper elicit no more in regard to their significance than the ever-recurring answers, "Long life," or "Good luck."

There is at present no available source of information in regard to the symbolism of Japanese art motives to which the general reader may turn, with the exception of a few pages in Bowes's *Japanese Pottery* or in Murray's *Handbook of Japan*, and the scattered details to be found in the books by W. E. Griffis, Lafcadio Hearn, and Henri L. Joly's *Legend in Japanese Art*. This last is, beyond question, a veritable storehouse of information, but it is presumably beyond the means of the majority of persons who are interested in the subject, and, as it is arranged alphabetically under the headings of unfamiliar Japanese names, it is difficult to use.

The conscious desire underlying the present handbook was to provide an answer to the most obvious questions in regard to the significance of Japanese art motives. It seemed a not impossible task to set down the familiar Buddhist symbols, with their meanings, and to give, with their recognized functions, a list of the more frequently depicted deities. But the subject gradually asserted its own independence and led away in many directions, for these designs or motives are the very embodiment of meaning, having their roots in the deepest recesses of a people's heart, and in the high antiquity of a civilization's beginnings.

This little volume does not lay claim to original research; such a treatment of any phase of oriental art would require a knowledge not only of the Japanese and Chinese languages, but of Thibetan, Pali, and Sanskrit, each with its many dialects, and would necessitate extended travel through all the lands that lie between Ceylon and Japan. It is but a bringing together of the results presented by European scholars in various more or less inaccessible publications, in an attempt to give an analysis of the art motives of Japan. Further, indeed, there has been a desire to show that the study of symbolism — that is, of symbolic art — is neither superficial nor curious, as it is not infrequently assumed to be by the casual reader. It is, on the contrary, a window through which the early history, religion, manners and customs, thoughts and feelings of a people may be observed. In the forgotten meanings that have attached, in times long past, to these drawings and objects, history lies buried; conversely, it may be read again through the study of the influences and amalgamation of influences which through centuries affected the art expression of the people.

Man's necessity for self-expression antedated the period of written records. As civilization advanced, this expression by means of symbols became more and more complex, for a symbol in passing from country to country became fraught with a heavier burden of significance; and so, today, when a student begins to unravel the meaning of such familiar motives as the lotus, the dragon, the tama, the nimbus, or the wheel of the law, they become to him the living records of the thoughts and beliefs of an ancient people.

Until recently, the study of numismatics was considered a pastime for the amateur or dilettante, but now it has become an indispensable adjunct to history, supplying exact data otherwise unprocurable. And so it might be with a judicious and scientific study of symbolism. Such men as Count Goblet d'Alviella, Sir J. G. Frazer, L. R. Farnell, Salomon Reinach, and William Simpson, have already pointed the way and indicated the methods to be employed; but a more general recognition of the value of the subject to the historian and archeologist, the artist and designer, is of the utmost importance.

A thorough examination of the monuments and pictorial records is necessary, as well as of the older writings of native scholars and priests. Now, these writings — and this is especially true of the Orient — cannot be taken as interpretative, or even authoritative. They are material for study; for, generally speaking, the oriental writer states the custom, religious practice, legend, sutra, prayer, or hymn of praise, without either question or explanation. Indeed, the peculiar quality of the oriental mind is shown in the absence of the spirit of investigation, and in its apparent ability to accept without question the stories and beliefs that have come, through various channels, to be a vital part of religious and civic life. It is

not one of the least stumbling-blocks in the way of arriving at a clear interpretation that, when a rite or object has once been held sacred, a superstitious feeling continues to attach to it even after the original associations of its use have long been forgotten. What any oriental writing provides, therefore, is not an authoritative explanation of a symbol, but the evidence as to what was thought of the symbol at a given time and in a given country.

The widespread use of religious symbolism throughout the Orient presents a problem of profound interest. It can probably be accounted for by the conditions of life under which the people lived; populations were large, while governments were far from taking measures for their betterment or education. A large mass of people was thus left uneducated and uncared for, and under these circumstances the need of self-expression was forced, to a greater extent than in western countries, into religious channels. The religious character, so deeply rooted in the national life of the Indian races, has always continued the guiding principle in their art.

In seeking to account for the particular forms of Japanese art symbols, it early becomes apparent that they are not, generally speaking, of native origin. Indigenous symbols there are, but Japan has been the recipient for many centuries of art forms from Korea, China, Thibet, and India. As Buddhism is the greatest religion of the East, it is natural to look to it for an explanation of most of the art motives of Buddhistic countries. This is, however, to ignore the fact that Buddhism is not what might be called an original source. Its symbols can be traced in various directions — to Brahmanism, obviously, but also to siftings from Arabia, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Greece. So in many cases the study that

begins with the little Island Empire leads back, by tortuous routes, to the Mediterranean Sea.[1]

Much remains also to be done with the ideographic language and the almost childlike interest in the double meaning of words, in a search for an explanation of the meanings of symbols. For example, *kombu*, "seaweed," is used as a symbol of gladness, because *yorokobu* means "to rejoice"; *mame*, "bean," signifies bodily strength, because a word similarly pronounced means "robust"; *kachiguri*, "chestnut," represents success, as *kachi* means "victory"; the *daidai* is a bitter orange used as an emblem of good omen, for there is a Chinese word, *dai-dai*, which signifies "generation after generation."

In the preparation of this book, these factors have all been taken into consideration, but many times the origin and significance of a symbol have been sought without success, because of the shrouding veil of time, and the lack of predecessors or path-finders in this field of investigation. An attempt has been made, however, to explain, in as simple and tangible a manner as possible, the familiar designs that meet one's eye on every Japanese object. The questions have been asked of each symbol: Is it of Shinto, Buddhist, or Taoist origin? Does it owe its existence to the fact that it is an attribute of some deity, or is it responsible to legend or myth? Is it a survival of some superstitious belief in the talismanic quality of an object — the belief that an object may have the power of warding off evil? Or, again, Is it due to some double meaning of a word?

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[1] Ernest Francisco Fenollosa, in his important work, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, presents a theory of the possibilities of even wider borrowings — suggesting that the earliest Chinese and Japanese art shows marked affiliation with Pacific Coast art forms.

An effort has also been made to repress as much as possible the esoteric side of symbolism and rather to suggest the historic migrations of symbols and to reveal the delightful naïveté of the oriental, especially of the Japanese, mind.

The scenes from Chinese and Japanese history, the legends and tales with which the folklore of the country abound, are outside the scope of this book. The Tale of the Forty-Seven Ronins; of Urashima, the Rip Van Winkle of Japan; of Kiyohime, the personification of disappointed love; of the Tongue-cut Sparrow; of Momotaro, the Peach Child; of Yoshitsune, the famous warrior; of Benkai and his bell; and the stories from the Monogatari — all these are not only favorite subjects with the *Nō* dances, but are told repeatedly in all the decorative work of Japan. Here, however, they must remain, merely as a suggestion of the rich mine within the reach of those interested.

M. R. A.

San Francisco, California

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Part One

PLANTS

Verily, even plants and trees, rocks and stones, all shall enter into Nirvana.—*Buddhist text.*

PART I

PLANTS

A Japanese artist will not willingly paint a flower out of season or a snow scene when summer sounds and scents are in the air. Certain principles determining his choice of subjects have been handed down to him, and the period of the year, the festival, ceremony, or type of entertainment for which the picture is designed are always considered.

The significance of the familiar groupings of plants and animals is sometimes obvious, sometimes obscure. Astrological fancies, legends, proverbs, symbolic significances, all contribute reasons for the existence of certain popular combinations. It is probable that many of these associations are due merely to old Chinese poetical compositions, and are without symbolic meaning. Well-known examples of this are: the swallow and the willow; the sparrow and the bamboo; the dove and the plum blossom; the squirrel and the vine; the phoenix and the *kiri;* the quail and the millet.

THE PLANTS OF THE FOUR SEASONS

The list of the Plants of the Four Seasons varies, for it is difficult to reconcile the new calendar with the old lunar calendar so long used in Japan, but the following list may be taken to include those usually mentioned: as emblems of spring, the *umé* (plum), *suisen* (daffodil), and *fuku-ju-sō* (*adonis amuraisis,* a crocus-like flower with yellow blossoms);

of summer, the *shaku-yaku* (peony),[1] *botan* (tree-peony), and *yuri* (lily); of autumn, the *hasu* (lotus) and the *kiku* (chrysanthemum); of winter, the *kan-kōbai* (crimson plum).

THE SEVEN PLANTS OF AUTUMN

The "Seven Plants of Autumn" — *nanakusa* — are apparently a poetical list entirely unrelated to "The Plants of the Four Seasons," and as ordinarily given are: *hagi* (a *lespedeza*), the Japanese bush-clover, a leguminous plant, native of China and Japan; *obana*[2] (*eulalia japonica*), a beautiful tall grass; *kusa* (*pueraria*), a kind of arrowroot which has a mass of purple blossoms; *nadeshiko*, a wild pink; *ominaeshi* (*patrinia scabiosaefolia*), a species of valerian having a large yellow flower; *fujibakama*, the Chinese agrimony (*eupatorium chinense*), with small pink-and-white flowers; *asagao*,[3] convolvulus or morning-glory.

THE FLOWERS OF THE MONTHS

The first to appear is the blossom of the plum tree, which, in the opening months of the year, gladdens the heart with visions of approaching spring; and later on, in April and May, the cherry flowers clothe the landscape with what appears to the eye to be a living mass of rosy light, so compact are they. Then comes the wistaria, with its great clusters of flowers in a pro-

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[1] Of a beautiful woman it is said:

"Tate ba shaku-yaku
Suware ba botan
Aruku sugata wa yuri no hana."

"When she stands she is like the peony; when she sits she is like the tree-peony; when she walks she is like the lily."

[2] *Obana* is not the name of the *eulalia japonica* itself, which the Japanese call *susuki*, but of its blossom or tassel.

[3] The *asagao* is sometimes replaced by the large-flowered flat-bell, *kikyō* (*platycodon grandiflorum*).

fusion unknown in other countries; lovingly tended and cared for during the winter frosts, it forms for each peasant a summer awning for his cottage porch from which the great racemes of purple and white blossoms hang almost to the ground, and give out a sweet perfume like the delicious smell of new-made honey. In May and June the tree-peony, with its crimson flowers, adds brilliancy to the scene, and long stretches of dark velvety-purple, violet, and snow-white iris make a sight of incredible beauty. With August comes the lotus, which so fills the ponds and pools that one would hardly think there was water underneath it, did not one know the plant was aquatic. In October the country is rendered joyous by the flowering of the chrysanthemum, and those who have the gift of poesy make verses in praise of the imperial flower, and all alike hold festival in its honor. As autumn closes in, the hillsides are brightened by the crimson and scarlet hues of the maple leaves, which, contrasted with the evergreen foliage of the feathery bamboo and stately pine, bring the year to a close amid a glory of which those who live in other and less favored climes know nothing.[1]

Ernest W. Clement, in *The Japanese Floral Calendar*, gives a somewhat different list: January, the pine; February, the plum; March, the peach; April, the cherry; May, the wistaria; June, the iris; July, the morning-glory; August, the lotus; September, the seven grasses; October, the maple; November, the chrysanthemum; December, the camellia.

SHO-CHIKU-BAI
(Pine-Bamboo-Plum)

A familiar group of plant forms consists of the pine tree, the bamboo, and the plum tree. The idea of the triad is of Chinese origin, and its Chinese name — *shō-chiku-bai* — still clings to it, *shō* being the Chinese name for the pine, *chiku*

[1] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery*, p. 489.

for the bamboo, and *bai* for the plum. The Japanese equivalents are: *matsu*, *take*, and *umé*, respectively.

Symbolically, the pine, the bamboo, and the plum are suggestive of longevity, rectitude, and sweetness; in association they are considered emblems of happiness and good fortune. The subject is frequently used in decoration, always at the New Year, and is rendered in many ways: sometimes only the merest indication of flower or branch is drawn; again, the three are carefully depicted, and thus often accompany a gift to indicate the good wishes of the donor.

When a marriage takes place, there is placed in the room where the ceremony is performed a *shimadai* or "island stand." This is a low, ornamental stand on which are arranged stones in the form of Horaizan (*q.v.*), a mountain of one of the Happy Isles; branches of the pine, the bamboo, and the plum; miniature figures of the crane and tortoise — both emblems of longevity; and figures of an old man and an old woman who suggest the idea of a long and happy married life.

SHI KUNSHI
(The Four Princes)

Another group of plants, a favorite with both poet and artist, is the *shi kunshi*. It includes the *ran*, an orchid of sweet fragrance that grows in the deep mountains; the *kiku*, chrysanthemum; the *matsu*, pine; and the *umé*, plum.

Shi kunshi, meaning "four princes" or "four gentlemen," suggests that each one of the group has attained the highest degree of perfection, as a prince or a gentleman has attained the highest degree of virtue and honor. Sometimes only two or three of the group are drawn — usually the chrysanthemum and the bamboo — but the symbolic significance of the four is always implied.

HASU
(Lotus)

Wherever Buddhism has held sway the art of the country is indelibly stamped with the lotus as its most conspicuous symbol. As a symbol, the lotus was first used to signify the sun.

> Every morning the lotus flower opens under the first rays of that luminary to close again at eventide, and it seems to spring up of itself on the surface of the placid waters. . . . . It perhaps symbolizes less the sun itself than the solar matrix, that mysterious sanctuary into which the sun retires every evening, there to acquire fresh life. This miracle, which was believed to be renewed each day, was regarded as the origin of whatever exists. . . . . The Indian sacred books speak constantly of the gods as springing from the lotus; it is on a golden lotus that Brahma appears in the beginning of time, and it is with the different parts of this plant that he created the world. . . . . An old legend relates that Brahma keeps watch six months of the year and sleeps the other six in a lotus flower of extraordinary beauty.[1]

Myths such as these obviously add to the strength of the symbolism, and it is but a step from the expression of solar renascence to human birth, resurrection, and immortality. This meaning the Egyptians, and the nations of the East, emphasized and developed. The Buddhists, elaborating this symbolism, adopted the Flower of Life, not only as a symbol of new birth, but of Nature in her infinite manifestations: the eternally active principle; the creative power; and the innumerable worlds that fill space — the Buddha dwelling in each of them.

The wheel has ever been a symbol of the sun, and the wheellike form of the lotus — the petals taking the place of the spokes — typifies the doctrine of perpetual cycles of existence, the chain of cause and effect.

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[1] Goblet d'Alviella, *The Migration of Symbols*, p. 28.

It is thus they carried to the confines of Asia the Lotus of the Good Law; even today in the Himalayas there is no valley so remote that the traveler does not hear an utterance of sanctification and of welcome, the mystic formula: *Om mani padme hum,* "Oh, the Jewel in the Lotus." It has been said that no prayer in any part of the world is so frequently repeated as the Jewel and the Lotus *mantra.*[1]

The phrase is undoubtedly of phallic origin,[2] the jewel representing the male element, and the lotus the female element; the full and bursting seed-pods suggesting fecundity. Naturally, the lotus was also adopted as a symbol of the productive power of the waters, which spread life and vegetation over the earth. It puts forth, amidst its broad leaves which float upon the surface of the water, a large flower,

the base and center of which are shaped like a bell or inverted cone, and punctuated on the top with little cells or cavities, in which the seeds grow. The orifices of these cells being too small to let them drop out when ripe, they shoot forth in new plants in the place where they were formed, the bulb of the vessel serving as a matrix to nourish them until they acquire a degree of magnitude sufficient to burst it open and release themselves, when they sink to the bottom, or take root wherever the current happens to deposit them, being thus of a nature reproductive in itself.[3]

By the gradual growth of an idea the lotus has become a special symbol of Buddha, who is everywhere represented standing or sitting upon a lotus flower. "As soon as he entered this world, he walked seven steps to each of the cardinal points and a lotus flower grew up at every step."[4] It is also

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[1] Goblet d'Alviella, *The Migration of Symbols,* p. 28.
[2] Cf. M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism,* p. 372.
[3] R. P. Knight, *The Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology,* p. 105.
[4] William Simpson, *The Buddhist Praying-Wheel,* p. 43.

placed beneath many of the images of the deities and saints of the Buddhist pantheon. The *Goku-raku* or Buddhist Paradise is shown as a garden with lotus buds "in colors not of this world. Some have burst open; and in their luminous hearts, in a radiance like that of dawn, tiny naked infants are seated. These are souls, new Buddhas, born into bliss."[1] Furthermore, at funerals, a lotus is carried before the body, expressing the hope that the departed one may enter into the "Paradise of the Lotus Seat."

Having once been adopted as a symbol, the lotus has lent itself to many beautiful conceptions. As an emblem of Nirvana its expanded flower, reposing upon the calm waters of a mirror-like lake, suggest the peace and rest for which man longs. Its wonderful pale pink or pure white blossoms,[2] rising untainted from the mud and ooze which give them birth, suggested the idea of purity to the poetic imagination of the early oriental mind, and were inevitably symbolic of the soul of man rising unsullied by the sordidness of worldly desires to a state spiritually undefiled.

The lotus is often drawn with eight petals, representing the eight intelligences of the Buddhist teachings. Fuji-no-yama rising white-capped with eight distinct depressions around its crater, is spoken of in Japan with love and reverence as the Mountain of the Heavenly Lotus.

TAKE
(Bamboo)

Useful, beautiful, symbolic, the bamboo stands as an object most dear to the heart of the Japanese. It grows throughout

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1 Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 57.

2 The *Nelumbium speciosum* is the species of lotus that figures in Buddhist mythology. The blue lotus, *Nymphoea coerulaea*, which occasionally appears in Buddhist art, is one of the Egyptian varieties.

the Empire, and there are some fifty different species. It is used in the building of houses and temples; for water-pipes and flag-poles; and in the manufacture of boxes, brush-handles, chop-sticks, and utensils of all kinds. Its tender shoots are an important article of food.[1]

With its tall, graceful stalks, and slender, feathery leaves, it has ever been a favorite art motive.

As a symbol, it is one of the many things signifying long life. The origin of this meaning it is not difficult to understand, for the bamboo is an evergreen, and attains a great age. Less obviously, it is a symbol of constancy and fidelity. This is a pun in symbolism. There is a Chinese character, *setsu*, which signifies both the node or joint of the bamboo, and fidelity and constancy. The idea of constancy and endurance is also indicated by the oft-repeated phrase: *Take ni yuki ore nashi*, "Though the bamboo is pressed to earth by the weight of snow, it does not break, but rises erect and beautiful after the snow is melted."

Bamboo laden with snow (Crest)

A favorite art subject is the "Seven Wise Men," a group of famous literary men who retired to a bamboo grove for meditation and study. This story is also told in China in a somewhat different form; in the latter, the wise men were the ministers of an ancient Chinese king. When their advice was rejected by their master, they also retired to the quiet of a bamboo forest and gave up their lives to literary pursuits.

Take ni suzume, "the bamboo and the sparrow," is a combination frequently met with. The association is explained

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[1] Charles Holme, "The Uses of Bamboo in Japan," *Transactions of the Japan Society*, London, Vol. I (1892), pp. 23–48.

by an old story. A Chinese king, who lived about two thousand years ago, planted around his palace a bamboo forest three hundred miles square. The term, used to refer to the members of the imperial family, gradually came to be *take no sono*, which means "bamboo forest." The *suzume* ("sparrow") sings *chu, chu*, which sounds like the Japanese word for "loyal," and the song of the sparrow is interpreted as a warning, "Be loyal, be loyal." The combination of the bamboo and the sparrow suggests, therefore, the idea of loyalty to the emperor. It may also be symbolical of friendship, because of the graceful yielding of the bamboo to the bird.

Take no toro, "the bamboo and the tiger," drawn together, is an Indian idea, suggesting safety. The elephant cannot penetrate a bamboo jungle, which is, therefore, the refuge of the tiger.

Take ni tsuru, "the bamboo and the crane," is a common emblem of longevity and happiness. The evergreen bamboo expresses unchangeable faithfulness and the long life of the crane symbolizes youth in age, which is the ideal of happiness in Japan.

Poems written on oblong strips of paper are hung upon bamboo branches during the *Tanabata-no-setsu*, the Festival of the Lady Weaver, which is held on the seventh day of the seventh month, when two stars, the celestial lovers, who dwell upon either side of the Milky Way, cross a bridge of ravens and meet on the banks of the River of Heaven and renew their vows. This is often depicted.

SAKURA
(Cherry Tree)

The cherry blossom is Japan's own flower, more omnipresent than the chrysanthemum, and indigenous to the soil of the Yamato hillsides and to the heart of the "home provinces" that surround

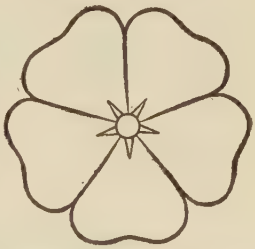
Nara and Kyōto. It did not come from China, where the little white mountain-flower is unhonored and unsung, and it had reigned long in favor before the "new religion" came over from the mainland, with its lotus symbol and peony decoration. As early as the fifth century, the emperor and his court used to go to the Palace of the Young Cherry Tree, near Nara, to view the blossoms and make boating excursions about the cherry-bordered lake. There were imperial garden-parties then, when princes, priests, knights, and nobles spent their souls in sketchy odes, and tied the poems to the branches. A thousand years, and five hundred years more, have passed away, and the imperial garden-parties continue. . . . . Painters, decorators, designers, artists, and artisans of every degree and kind have employed the flowers and buds more than those of any other tree. Forty cherry-blossom crests are found in books of heraldry, and a cherry blossom superimposed on a chrysanthemum forms the insignia of one of the princely houses. The young peers at the Nobles' School wear a metal cherry blossom on their caps and collars, and in April all the sweets and cakes, and half the pretty things one eats, are in the shape of the five-petaled flower, or at least are ornamented with it [for it is then the masses of these exquisite pale-pink flowers are of unimaginable beauty]. When the trees flower, it is as though fleeciest masses of cloud faintly tinged by sunset had floated down from the highest sky to fold themselves about the branches. This comparison is no poetical exaggeration; neither is it original; it is an ancient Japanese description of the most marvelous floral exhibition which Nature is capable of making. . . . . There are no green leaves; these come later: there is only one glorious burst of blossoms, veiling every twig and bough in their delicate mist; and the soil beneath each tree is covered deep out of sight by fallen petals as by a drift of pink snow.[1]

Whether cultivated or uncultivated, the Japanese cherry trees are suggestive of symbolic meaning. Those planted in

[1] Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore, "The Cherry Blossoms of Japan," *Century Magazine*, LXXIX (1910), pp. 643–653.

the old samurai gardens were not cherished for their loveliness alone; their spotless blossoms were regarded as symbols of that delicacy of sentiment and blamelessness of life belonging to high courtesy and true knightliness. As the cherry flower is first among flowers, says an old proverb, so should the warrior be first among men.

The cherry blossom may be called the national flower of Japan, for it has long been an accepted symbol of patriotism. This significance is in part due to an incident in the life of the dethroned emperor, Go Daigo, of the Hojo period (1219–1333). Go Daigo was banished and imprisoned, and so closely was he watched that his faithful subjects could not communicate with him. Kojima Takanori, one of his devoted followers, desired to show him the devotion of his supporters. He devised a means of communication with his emperor. Entering the grounds surrounding the house in which Go Daigo was confined, he scraped off the bark of a cherry tree and wrote upon the smooth surface of the trunk a verse referring to Kosen, an ancient Chinese king who had been defeated and deprived of his kingdom, but was later restored to power by the heroism of his faithful slave Hanrei. The verse was:



Cherry Blossom (Crest)

> Spare, O Heaven, the captive Kosen,
> Hanrei may come in time to save.

The writing was noticed by the guards, but as they could not decipher the characters they showed them to Go Daigo, who at once understood the allusion and knew that his friends were working in his behalf. This incident is often represented in art.

The cherry blossom is the chosen flower of the Dolls' Festival, and its petals ornament the *saké* cups used during the marriage ceremony. Lafcadio Hearn says:

> Though the plum flower is certainly a rival in beauty of the cherry, the Japanese compare woman's beauty — physical beauty — to the cherry flower, never to the plum; but womanly virtue and sweetness, on the other hand, are compared to the plum, never to the cherry.[1]

The following lines give some idea of the love of the Japanese people for their national flower:

> Shiki jima nō
> Yamato gokoro o
> Hito towa ba
> Asahi ni niō
> Yama zakura.

(If one should ask what is the heart of Yamato [Japan], it is the mountain cherry blossom, which exhales its perfume in the morning sun.)

UME
(Plum Tree)

Before the snow is really gone, the exquisite blossoms of the plum tree appear as a herald of spring; they are the flowers of the New Year's festival and are called "the elder brothers of the hundred flowers."

The *umé* is emblematic of long life, and is closely associated with the pine and bamboo. The pine and bamboo are evergreen and flourish throughout the winter; the plum throws out flowering twigs from leafless branches. They are all, therefore, suggestive of longevity, and are termed the Three Friends of Winter.

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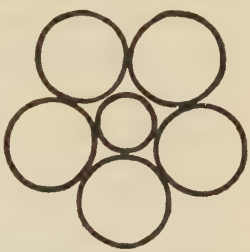
[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 355.

In China, a Taoist legend tells that Lao Tsŭ, the revered founder of Taoism, was born under the snowy branches of the blossoming plum tree.

The so-called "hawthorne pattern," a blue-and-white porcelain, made both in China and Japan, is, in reality, a representation of the "beautiful effect of the falling blossoms of the early plum on broken ice, which has, in China, floated down the rivers from the north and found the plum in full bloom at the river's mouth."



Plum Blossom (Crest)

The nightingale, *uguisu*, is often associated with the plum. "Its liquid, enchanting voice is sometimes said to be the perfume of the plum made audible,"[1] and its sweet song, with the fragrance of the plum blossom, is accepted as a happy presage of the coming year. They are also one of the emblems of joy connected with the marriage ceremony. A tale is told of a famous artist whose painting of a beautiful branch was so naturally executed that an *uguisu* flew into the open window, deceived by its appearance of reality, and sent forth its glad song of welcome.

Sosei, a ninth-century poet, wrote:

> Amid the branches of the silvery bowers
> The nightingale does sing; perchance he knows
> That Spring has come, and takes the later snows
> For the white petals of the plum's sweet flowers.

There is a beautiful story of the *kō-bai*, the pink plum. A famous Japanese poet, Tsurayuki, had a daughter whose

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[1] Mary McNeil Fenollosa, "*Umé*, or Plum Flower, Belongs to the History, Literature, and Art of Japan," *The Craftsman*, XI (1907), pp. 405–421.

joy and pride was a large pink plum tree which grew in the garden of their home. After the death of Tsurayuki, the maiden cared more tenderly than ever for the tree that had gladdened the heart and inspired the pen of her father, but a summons came from the Mikado ordering the removal of the tree to the gardens of his court. The maiden sorrowed in silence, and then sent to her emperor the following verse:

Choku nareba
Itomio kashi koshi
Uguisu no
Yado wato towaba
Ikaga kotaen.

(It is the imperial order, which it is wise to obey, but if the nightingale comes and asks, "Where is my home?" how shall I answer him?)

The Mikado's heart was touched and he abandoned the idea of transplanting the tree; furthermore, he gave to it the name by which all plum trees of this kind are now known, *O Shukubai*, "home plum." It is believed that the tree of Tsurayuki is still standing in the grounds of the temple of Sho-koku in Kyōto.

Ten-jin, the God of Calligraphy, loved to sit and study beneath the branches of a blossoming plum tree; his crest is a conventionalized plum blossom — five circles grouped around a central disc.

MOMO
(Peach)

From China comes the beautiful symbolism of the sacred peach — the tree of life of the Kunlun paradise. It is an emblem of marriage and a symbol of longevity. Much of the allegorical character with which this tree is invested is derived from an ode in the *Shi-King* commencing:

Graceful, Oh, graceful yon peach tree stands,
Blooming and bright are its blossoms.
This maiden comes to her husband's abode;
Well will she order her house and home.

Here the poet, celebrating the virtues of a prince's well-chosen consort, likens her, in grace and promise, to a blossoming peach tree; commentators add that the bloom of the peach symbolizes the virtues of the princess.

Still more prominent is the position given to the peach tree in the mythical fancies of the Taoists. The most ancient superstitions of the Chinese attributed magical virtues to the twigs of the peach, and the fabulists of the Han dynasty added many extravagant details to the existing legends. They describe the peach tree of the gods as yielding the fruit of immortality; and especially was this the case with the tree which grew near the palace of Si Wang Mu (*Sei ō bo*). This fabulous being lived with her troop of genii on Mount Kunlun, and held intercourse from time to time with favored imperial votaries. The imagination of the Taoist writers was exercised in framing glowing descriptions of the magnificence of her mountain palace.

Here by the borders of the Lake of Gems grows the peach tree of the genii, whose fruit confers the gift of immortality, which the goddess bestows upon the chosen being admitted to her presence.[1]

Tobosaku (*q.v.*) gained his long term of life by eating some of these celestial peaches; hence the peach has become one of the many symbols of long life. In the month of March, in Japan, peach *saké* is drunk as an *elixir vitae*.

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[1] W. F. Mayers, *The Chinese Reader's Manual*, p. 213.

A historical incident has given rise to the frequent representations of

an orchard of peach trees with oxen. It refers to a time in Chinese history when the emperor Bu, desiring to divert the thoughts of his people from warlike pursuits, followed the advice of his minister, the gentle Taikobo, and disbanded his armies, turned his horses loose to the mountains, and his oxen in the peach orchards of Tōrin.[1]

There is an old Chinese saying:

"Turn the horse on the flower-covered mountains, and the oxen into the peach orchard."

MATSU
(Pine)

The pine tree grows in all parts of Japan, and the inimitable drawings, by the Japanese artists, of the pine branch against the sky are familiar to every lover of Japanese art.

Pine Tree (Crests)

A single tree at Karasaki is so large and so picturesque that it is often depicted. Pine trees are believed to live for hundreds of years; at the great age of one thousand years their sap is said to turn to amber. Because of its long span of life the pine was often planted in the gardens of the samurai to

[1] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery*, p. 494.

express the idea of a long and hardy life. A story is told of a beautiful tree in the garden of the palace of Taiko. The tree died before its time, and the Mikado mourned, brooding over his own fate, for he feared that the death of the tree was a bad omen, indicating that his own end was near. The court poet, however, comforted his master by composing the following poem:

Taiko no
Oniwa no matsu wa
Kare ni peri
Ono ga yowai wo
Kimi ni yu zurite.

(The pine tree in the garden of Taiko is dead, but it has given its own life to lengthen the life of its lord.)

The pine is an evergreen, and in the beautiful play, *Takasago*, the following lines refer to this:

Aye, through Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter, under deepest snow, and for a thousand years it bideth green, yea, for ten flower cycles of a thousand years its hue endureth.[1]

It has thus become a symbol of stability of character and of unflinching purpose.

Its needle-shaped leaves are believed to have the power of driving away demons.

The pine is the only plant which has an official title. It is called *Goko-no-taifu*. This recalls the story of the Chinese Emperor, Shin-no-Shikwo (259–210 B.C.), who was overtaken by a rainstorm when hunting in the woods. He sought shelter beneath a gnarled pine, which instantly put forth new branches and thus protected the monarch from the severity of the downpour.

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[1] F. V. Dickins, *Primitive and Mediaeval Japanese Texts*, p. 406, "Takasago."

The pine tree is intimately associated with the thought of wedded felicity. There is some confusion among the various writers on this subject. Some give the story of an old pine tree growing on the shore of Takasago which is single at the root but which springs into two trunks;[1] it is haunted by two spirits, an old man and an old woman — Jo and Uba — who are depicted with a rake and broom gathering up the pine needles. These simple implements suggest their mutual labors, and sometimes the latter alone are drawn to bring the story to mind. Other writers, among them the author of the famous *Takasago* drama, refer to the Wedded Pines — the Pine of Takasago and the Pine of Sumiyoshi — "the pines that grow old together; yet wide apart lie the strands of Sumiyoshi and Takasago."[2] At wedding ceremonies, the story of the "Twain Trees" is, in various ways, represented, and the following lines are sung as an epithalamium:

In waveless peace
The four seas lap our shores,
The gentle tide winds
No murmur mid the woods wake,
Oh, fair the age is!
Fair yonder Pine tree's spousal,
Aiöino
Aiöinomatsu,
Whose happy augury
Men note with awe and wonder,
While vainly seek they
Meet words their thanks to utter,
In such an age
That they do live rejoicing
In their Lord's abundant bounty.[3]

[1] F. V. Dickins, *Primitive and Mediaeval Japanese Texts*, p. 406, "Takasago."
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 405.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 406.

The following eulogistic lines are also from the same drama:

In the universe of things that grow, doth not the Pine tree surpass all the world of trees; bright as a full bevy of court nobles, the green leafery defieth a thousand autumns unshowing any change of hue — well worthy, belike, the Pine tree is of the badge of rank bestowed upon it by China's sovran Shikwo! In barbarian lands, within our own borders, by all the peoples of earth, is not the Pine tree held blessed?

A New Year custom which has been practiced for a thousand years is the placing of a pair of carefully selected *kado-matsu* or gate-pines before every gateway and door. The trees are paired, one rough and prickly, the other softer and more graceful. They are considered as male and female. The male is placed upon the left, and the female on the right. With these pine trees are often placed bamboo cuttings, and, sometimes, plum branches, each symbolizing longevity. There is a poem by a famous Buddhist priest named Ikkū, about the *kado-matsu:*

Kado-matsu
Meido no tabi no
Ichi ri zuka
Medetaku mo ari
Medetaku mo nashi.

This means that each tree is a milestone on the journey to Meido, or that each New Year is the completion of another stage on the ceaseless journey to death; the last lines suggest that the *kado-matsu* may be of happy or of unhappy significance.

MOMIJI OR KAEDE
(Maple Tree)

In the autumn, the maple trees are a glory of color, their feathery, starlike leaves tinted with crimson and scarlet.

In the language of lovers, to present a bunch of maple leaves to one's love conveys the meaning that affection is changed to indifference, "even as the changing of the maple leaves in autumn."

A subject often depicted by the poetic, nature-loving Japanese is the preparation of tea over a fire of maple leaves.

Maple Tree (Crests)

In reality this would be considered almost an act of vandalism, but it recalls an old story that is frequently alluded to by poets and literary men when picnicking in the woods. A Chinese poet, Haku-raku-ten, wrote a beautiful poem about warming his wine over a fire of crimson maple leaves. When traveling one day with his retinue of nobles, the Japanese emperor Takakura stopped to rest and enjoy a cup of tea. One of the servants kindled the fire with a maple branch. The onlookers expected a sentence of instant death, but the emperor smiled and said: "I did not realize I had so literary a servant! He undoubtedly makes reference to the bit of Chinese classic poetry. He is forgiven!" The listeners thanked the gods for so kindly and generous an emperor.

From a painting by Hōkyo-Korin

DEER AND MAPLE

The maple tree and the stag are represented together—"in autumn the maple colors, and the stag calls the doe." It is their pairing-time.

I hear the stag's pathetic call
Far up the mountain side,
While tramping o'er the maple-leaves
Wind-scattered far and wide,
This sad, sad autumn tide.[1]

YANAGI
(Willow Tree)

In Japan, the willow tree is thought to be a ghostly thing, and weird are the stories told of it. Rarely is it found in old Japanese gardens, for it is believed to have the power of haunting human beings, and, as the tree grows old, to have really dangerous supernatural habits. The tree does not change its form or place, but its spirit, usually thought of as a beautiful woman, disengages itself from its dwelling and wanders forth. It is said that if the tree is cut, blood will flow from the gash.

An old story is told of a lovely maiden who was wooed by an ardent lover. The time came when she must reveal her secret and acknowledge that she was but the spirit of a *yanagi*. As she disappeared into the tree she moaned: "I am not a human being; the soul of the tree is my soul; the heart of the tree is my heart; the sap of the willow is my life."

The swallow is often depicted with the willow; this is probably because of some old Chinese poetical composition in which the two are combined; but to popular fancy the association suggests gentleness, for the tree is of a gentle nature, yielding

[1] William Nennis Porter, *A Hundred Verses of Old Japan*, p. 5.

to every breath of wind, and the swallow perched upon its branches is typical of grace and docility.

The flexibility of the willow branch is emblematic of *Ju-jitsu* (the art of self-defense), which is termed the "yielding art." An important school of *Ju-jitsu* is the *Yo-shin-Riu*, "School of the Willow Spirit."

The willow is sometimes used in religious ceremonies in place of the *sakaki* (*q.v.*) for sprinkling holy water. A spray of it is placed in one of the hands of the Senju Kwannon.

SAKAKI

(Cleyera japonica)

The *sakaki* is the sacred tree of the Shinto faith. Legend says that it grows upon the Mountain of Heaven. It is planted near Shinto temples. Originally the *gohei* (*q.v.*) were made of *sakaki* branches.

On the first day of the New Year it is used to decorate Shinto shrines. The reason of its choice, as in the case of many of the Shinto emblems, is its connection with the myth of the Sun Goddess. The Sun Goddess was enticed by many and various devices before she would come from retirement.

It is written in the *Ko-ji-ki* that —

eight hundred myriad deities assembled in the bed of the Tranquil River of Heaven, and bid the deity Thought-Includer think of a plan to bring forth the offended goddess from her cave and give light to a darkened world. Many things were done to attract her attention. A large *sakaki* tree was pulled up by the roots. It had five hundred branches and was from the Heaven-mount Kagu. Then the gods were ordered to put upon its upper branches the augustly complete string of curved jewels eight feet long and tie to the middle branches a mirror eight feet long and to hang upon its lower branches the pacificatory offerings.[1]

[1] *Ko-ji-ki, or Records of Ancient Matters,* translated by B. H. Chamberlain, p. 64.

SHIKIMI OR SHIKIBI
(Illicium religiosum)

The *shikimi* is an evergreen shrub resembling a laurel; it is fifteen or twenty feet high, and grows in the mountains. It belongs to the large order of Magnoliaciae. It is called anise tree because of the aromatic perfume of its flower, leaf, branch, and root. The Chinese and Japanese burn the fragrant seeds and bark as incense in the temples. In Japan, the tree is considered sacred, and fresh branches are used to decorate the tombs of the dead.

The bark of the tree is consumed very slowly and uniformly by fire and is employed in Japan by watchmen and by priests to mark the time.

A box a foot long is filled with ashes in which are marked furrows in parallel lines, strewed with powder of this bark. The lid being closed, with only a small hole left to supply air, the powder is set on fire at one end, is consumed very slowly, and the hours marked beforehand on these furrows are proclaimed in the daytime by the striking of bells in the temples, and in the night by the watch striking together two pieces of wood.[1]

YUZURIHA
(Daphniphillum macropodum)

The leaves of the *yuzuriha* are placed with the fern and attached to the *shime-nawa* or straw ropes which are stretched before the houses on New Year's Day. As the new leaves come before the old ones fall, the tree symbolizes the hope that the father will not pass away before the son has become a vigorous man and the head of a family. *Yuzuriha* leaves are thus indicative of successive generations.

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[1] Richard Hildreth, *Japan as It Was and Is,* Vol. II, p. 126.

KIRI
(Paulownia imperialis)

In April, the sunny hillsides of Japan are decked with the purple blossoms of the *kiri*. The tree is sometimes thirty or forty feet high, and its wood is used by the Japanese cabinet-maker for many purposes. The blossoms are in terminal clusters and, with the large vivid-green leaves, have great decorative value.

Kiri (Crest)

With the *hō-ō* bird, the *kiri* flower and leaf form a design used in the decoration of the emperor's furniture and clothing. The *kiri* is also one of the imperial crests; originally, the personal mark of the emperor. Its three-lobed leaf, with either five or seven blossoms arranged in three spikes rising from the leaf, forms one of the most familiar of the Japanese coats of arms; its use being no longer restricted to articles intended for the imperial family.

TACHIBANA
(Orange)

The fruit of the "everlasting fragrant tree" is indicative of sweetness, and is included in the *Takara-mono* (*q.v.*), or List of Precious Things.

Orange (Crest)

The orange blossom has long been associated, by the poets of Japan, with the *hototogisu* or cuckoo; together they symbolize "that which has gone before." Few things more effectually recall the past than a perfume, and the sweet, plaintive note of the cuckoo is ever a reminder of days gone by.

HŌ-Ō AND KIRI

DAIDAI

(Bitter Orange)

The *daidai* is a bitter orange, not used for eating, but only for decoration. It is placed among the New Year offerings. There is a Chinese word, *dai-dai*, signifying "generation after generation," and hence these oranges have become a fruit of good omen.

ZAKURO OR JAKURO

(Pomegranate)

The pomegranate is more frequently seen in Chinese than in Japanese art. The bursting fruit is represented as it was by the Greek and early Christian artists, and is symbolic of fecundity. Conventionalized, it is used as the crest of Kishibojin, in reference to the legend of her five hundred children, or to the belief that she was cured of her unnatural desire for human flesh by a diet of pomegranates — which are said to have a similar taste.

It is also a Buddhist sign, the fruit being supposed to represent the favorable influence believed to exist in the pomegranate tree, a twig of which is sometimes used instead of the willow for sprinkling water. The Chinese name, *kiat*, has the same pronunciation as the word for "luck."[1]

KACHIGURI

(Chestnut)

The dried chestnut is one of the symbols of the New Year festival. It represents success, the word *kachi* meaning "victory."

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[1] W. G. Gulland, *Chinese Porcelain*, p. 108.

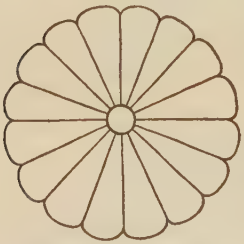
AOI
(Hollyhock)

The *aoi* is the mallow or hollyhock. It is apparently without symbolic meaning, but three of its leaves, *mitsu-aoi*, form the coat of arms of the great Tokugawa family, and it is, therefore, one of the most familiar figures in Japanese crests.

KIKU
(Chrysanthemum)

The chrysanthemum, the flower of the emperor, the flower of the Festival of Happiness (*Chōyō-no-setsu*), is of all subjects, floral or otherwise, the form most frequently seen in Japanese decorative art.[1]

The great love of the Japanese for this flower is shown in the extent of its cultivation: eight hundred varieties, it is said, have been produced, displaying over two hundred and fifty shades of color. The Japanese gardener has attained marvelous effects in training the growing plants over trellis-work to represent groups of mythological figures and historical scenes.



Chrysanthemum (Crest)

The chrysanthemum gardens near Tokyo are renowned, and garden-parties are given every year, on the third of November, to celebrate the emperor's birthday. At these festivals petals of the flower are placed in the *saké*-cups, and long life and happiness are thus insured to the drinker. A legend tells us that "there is

[1] The golden chrysanthemum was the essential decoration in the festival of the ingathering in southern India. Charles E. Gover, "The Pongol Festival in Southern India," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, N. S., v. (1871–1872), p. 101.

a hill, far away in Kai, known as Chrysanthemum Mount, which overhangs a river of crystal clarity. Those who drink from this stream, after the petals have fallen in, receive the boon of long life."[1] This accounts for the oft-repeated theme of chrysanthemum blossoms floating on running water.

The sixteen-petaled flower has long constituted the imperial crest; and is used on the imperial standard. It replaced the simple sun banner, which is the flag of Japan, and is, apparently, a more elaborate design of the sun with its rays.[2]

The phrase, *Sennin setsu pei o hiraku*, which likens the chrysanthemum, when it throws out its snowy blossoms, to a saint free from all worldly trouble, suggests that it may symbolize happiness and repose.

The chrysanthemum is sometimes associated in art with the fox. This combination is hard to understand—

for in Japan the fox personifies cunning and is credited with supernatural powers, which enable it to change itself into various shapes and forms, under which it bewitches people and leads them into danger and trouble. The fairy tales of Japan abound with stories of the tricks of foxes, one of which may account for the association of the chrysanthemum with them. In this it is related that a nine-tailed fox, metamorphosing itself into the form of a beautiful woman, bewitched a certain prince, who took her for his mistress; at times she disappeared from his house and resumed her natural shape, under which guise, whilst sleeping one day in a bed of chrysanthemums, her lover shot her in the forehead with an arrow. Again taking the form of a woman, she returned to him, and he recognized in her the fox which he had wounded.[3]

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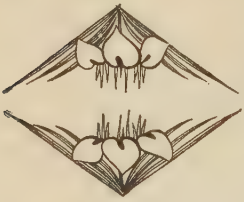
1 A. F. Otto and T. S. Holbrook, *Mythological Japan*, p. 51.

2 For a series of instructive drawings, see George C. Haité, "The Chrysanthemum in Japanese Art," *Transactions of the Japan Society*, London, III (1894–1895), pp. 47, 48.

3 J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery*, pp. 501-502.

SHO-BU OR AYAME
(Iris or *Sweet-flag)*

The iris, stately and graceful, grows almost without cultivation throughout Japan. It is credited with strength-giving properties, probably on account of the remarkable hardiness and vitality of its growth. Tradition holds that the dew falling upon the plant increases these properties. On the day before the Boys' Festival, therefore, great bunches of the leaves, which, being sword-shaped, suggest the soul of the warrior, are used to decorate the house-roof, and are left there over night so that they may receive the fall of evening dew. They are taken down early in the morning and thrown into the water in which the son of the house is to bathe. Bits of the blossom are also put into the *saké* which is drunk during the ceremonies of the day. It is thus that the essence of the plant is absorbed by the youth, and the spirit of valor and patriotism is inspired. The iris has become a common emblem of victory.



Iris (Crest)

KUWAI
(Sagittaria sagittata)

In the *Ko-ji-ki*, or *Records of Ancient Matters*, we read of the ravages of the the Fire-Producer God, and of the Clay-Hill Maiden who pacified him with the River Weed. The association of the Clay-Hill Goddess as a protector from fire, and of the Water Goddess, with the River Weed, as having the power to quell the Fire God, is an interesting mythological explanation of man's early attempts to combat the destructive power of fire.

On the terminal tiles of the roofs of the houses in Japan are carved, as a charm against fire, the broad leaves of the *kuwai,* a decorative water-plant or river weed. *Kuwai* leaves were also chosen by the *daimyos* as an ornament for the front of their helmets; they were made of brass, and in two forms, one low and broad, the other tall and slender, both suggesting the horns of a stag; they were symbolic of power and victory.[1]

BOTAN
(Peony)

The peony was brought to Japan in the eighth century from China, where it is one of the plants of the four seasons — the flower of summer. As an art motive, Japan is indebted to Korea for the wonderful variety of adaptation shown in presenting this gorgeous flower.

Peony (Crest)

Because of the size and beauty of its crimson blossoms, the peony is an emblem of regal power. It is associated with the *kara-shishi* or Chinese lion — the king of beasts and the king of flowers. Another interpretation of this combination is given:

In art, the peony is represented amongst the rocks with the *kara-shishi,* a Chinese association, known as the *botanni-kara-shishi,* which may illustrate the theory of the survival of the fittest, for it is said that of the cubs which fall to the ground amongst the bushes of the peony, only the strongest succeed in rejoining their mother by climbing the rocks and thus attaining maturity.[2]

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[1] Michel Revon, "Le Shintoïsme," *Revue de l'histoire des religions,* L (1904), p. 178: "Métaux, Argile, Eau, Gourde, Plante des rivières, tout l'appareil magique que le shintoïsme emploiera pour dompter le feu."

[2] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery,* p. 495.

FUJI
(Wistaria)

With the wistaria is associated much of the outdoor life of the Japanese. The vines are trained so as to form arbors and covered walks in the gardens and temple grounds. The wistaria trellises of the Shinto temple Kameido, in Tokyo, are renowned.

Wistaria (Crest)

The flower bursts into bloom in April and May, and the arbors, with their pendant, purple blossoms, are thronged with beauty-lovers who drink *saké* and write poems in praise of spring, and of the glory of the flowers about them. These poems, on long strips of paper, are attached to the budding flower clusters upon which lovers also hang verses and accept the more or less perfect development of the cluster as an omen of happiness or sorrow in their lives.

The wistaria is an emblem of youth, and, with the cuckoo, is the poetical representation of early summer. Hitomaro wrote:

> In blossoms the wistaria tree today
> Breaks forth, that sweep the wavelets of my lake:
> When will the mountain cuckoo come and make
> The garden vocal with his first sweet lay?

YAMABUKI
(Chorchorus or *Yellow Rose)*

The *yamabuki* blooms late in the spring. Its beautiful yellow flower, though without symbolic significance, has inspired many a lovely poem. Curiously, because of the golden-yellow color, the word *yamabuki* is used by the ultra-refined to designate money — for, among the higher classes, to speak directly of money is considered lacking in the finer feelings.

The *yamabuki* is commonly believed to be without seeds (*mino*). This has given rise to a poetic pun. Ota dōkan, a famous warrior, who founded, four hundred years ago, the castle at Tokyo, was overtaken, during one of his excursions in the mountains, by a heavy thunderstorm. He stopped at a near-by house to borrow a *mino* (rain-coat). The beautiful maiden who listened to his request looked embarrassed, and disappeared into the house. When she returned she had a *yamabuki* blossom in her hand which she presented without a word to the astonished warrior. He left the house puzzled and somewhat angered; but later, when he told of the incident to some of his friends, they marveled at the girl's learning, explaining that she undoubtedly had reference to a famous Japanese poem.

Na na ye yage
Hana wa sake domo
Yamabuki no
Mino hitotsu dani
Nakizo kanashiki.

(Although the *yamabuki* blooms in double and in treble, yet it is said that it hath no *mino* [seed].)

The maiden's adaptation of the poem was: "Although the world flourishes even as the *yamabuki*, yet, alas, I have no *mino* (rain-coat)!" Ota dōkan, deeply impressed, determined to devote all of his leisure time to study, and he became a famous man of letters.

ASAGAO[1]

(Morning-Glory)

The morning-glory, much loved by the artist and the poet,

[1] See an article of great interest by Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore, "Asagao (*Iponoea Purpurae*), the Morning Flower of Japan," *Transactions of the Japan Society*, London, v (1898–1901), pp. 198–217.

suggests to the Nature-lover the beauty and mystery of early rising. In its wild state it has a small, pink blossom. It was brought with the tea plant, about a thousand years ago, by Buddhist priests from China, where it grows wild. Now it is extensively cultivated, and the blossoms sometimes measure eight or nine inches across. The morning-glory grows with extraordinary rapidity, and is frequently found in the most unexpected places. In the old days, and even now in the interior of Japan, each family must obtain water for the household from the neighboring well. The famous poetess Chyō went one morning to replenish her pail of water and found a lovely morning-glory twining its tendrils about her bucket. Rather than disturb the plant, she begged water from her neighbors, and wrote the following exquisite little verse:

Asagao ni
Tsurubi torarete
Morai mizu.

(I found the morning-glory clinging to the well-bucket, and begged water.)

In allusion to this poem, flower arrangements of *asagao* are often made in a well-bucket.

INE
(Rice Plant)

The rice fields of Japan are a characteristic feature of the landscape, but the rice plant is not a common art motive. It is, however, always an expression of prosperity.

The graceful stalks with their heavy ears of grain form an unusually beautiful crest.

CHA-NO-RI
(Tea Plant)

The tea plant (*camellia theifera*) has been called the "queen of the camellias." It is a shrub from three to six feet high, with white, waxy flowers. It was introduced to Japan from China in the reign of Saga Tenno (810–823 A.D.). It is not often used as an art form and is apparently without symbolic meaning, but to the tea-loving Japanese it is always suggestive of comfort.

The fruit, used as a crest, is drawn in several different ways. It is very like the *tachibana* (orange) and may easily be taken for it. The more showy species of camellia are sometimes used in floral combinations but because the blossom is easily broken from the stem it is not appropriate for wedding decorations. It may, however, be used at funerals.

HAGI
(Lespedeza)

The *lespedeza*, or Japanese bush clover, covers the ground in the autumn with its small, insignificant purple blossoms.

The fifteenth night of the eighth moon, corresponding to our harvest moon, is celebrated with offerings of beans and dumplings, and bouquets of *eulalia* grass and *lespedeza* blossoms.

Because of the old poetic fables of the *lespedeza* as a fair maiden, and of the stag her lover, the plant is a favorite with artist and poet. It blossoms at the pairing-time of the deer, who frequent groves of the shrub.

NASUBI
(Egg-Plant)

The fruit of the egg-plant is a common article of food, and is frequently depicted. It has many seeds, which it scat-

ters when ripe, reproducing abundantly. This significant fact, added to the shape of the fruit — egg-shape, or the "shape of life" — has invested the *nasubi* with deep meaning. To dream of Fuji-no-yama, the sacred mountain, two falcons, and three egg-plants, is considered a lucky omen, indicating long life for the dreamer.

NADESHIKO
(Pink)

The pink grows wild in Japan, and is one of the Seven Plants of Autumn. It is called "little darling," and is used as an expression of love.

DAIKON
(Radish)

The *daikon* (*raphanus sativus*) is a large species of radish,[1] sometimes two feet long. It is an important article of food,

Pink (Crest)

Radish (Crest)

and is often depicted, especially in comic drawings. Probably because of the similarity of sound, it is occasionally associated with Daikoku, the God of Wealth, as a symbol of flourishing prosperity. It has been conventionalized and used as a crest.

[1] Another species of radish is called *wasabi*. As its root sprouts readily in water, it is commonly used in this country as a table decoration.

From a drawing by Hokusai

THE CASTING OUT OF DEVILS BY THE USE OF BEANS (MAME)

MAME
(Bean)

Black beans signify bodily strength and health, because a word similarly pronounced, though written with a different character, means "robust."

In speaking of the dried white beans, which are always eaten on the first day of the year, Lafcadio Hearn writes:

> The festival of Setsubun, according to the ancient Japanese calendar, corresponds to the beginning of the natural year — the period when winter first softens into spring. It is chiefly famous because of the curious ceremony of casting out of devils, *Oni-yarai.* On the eve of the Setsubun, a little after dark, the *Yaku-otoshi,* or caster out of devils, wanders through the streets from house to house rattling his *shakujo* and uttering his strange professional cry: *Oni wa soto! Fuku wa uchi!* ("Devils out! Good fortune in!") For a trifling fee he performs his little exorcism in any house to which he is called. This simply consists in the recitation of certain parts of a Buddhist *kyō,* or sutra, and the rattling of the *shakujo* [in each room of the house]. Afterwards, dried peas [beans] *(shiro-mame)* are thrown about the house in four directions. For some mysterious reason, devils do not like dried peas [beans] — and flee therefrom. The peas [beans] thus scattered are afterwards swept up and carefully preserved until the first clap of spring thunder is heard, when it is the custom to cook and eat some of them.[1]

HYOTAN
(Gourd)

The fruit of the *hyōtan* is a gourd which when dried is used for the purpose of carrying *saké,* the national drink of Japan; in art, however, the symbolism and legends of China still cling to it.

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* p. 498. Lafcadio Hearn mistakenly called *mame* "peas" instead of beans.

Because of its durability, it was commonly accepted as an emblem of longevity, and because of the large number of seeds it contains it symbolizes fertility and a numerous progeny. Yet so closely is it associated with the outfit of priests and pilgrims that it suggests many curious legends. Among these is the story of the immortal, Le-tee-kwae, who was instructed in Taoist lore by Lao Tsŭ himself. After Lao Tsŭ had passed into celestial spheres, he occasionally summoned his disciple to hold interviews with him. To answer the summons the spirit of Le-tee-kwae had to leave his body. This led to many complications, for his body had to be left in the care of some trustworthy person, and the story of his life is, consequently, a curious one. Among his emblems is the gourd, which is represented with a scroll escaping from its mouth, symbolizing the power of the immortal to liberate his spirit from his body.

In an obscure way, the gourd is associated with Daikoku, for in the early representations of him, his hammer is replaced by a bundle of gourds.

KINOKO
(Fungus)

The sacred branching fungus, a species of *agaric*, grows at the roots of trees. It is brightly colored, and is sometimes strikingly large and beautiful. By the Chinese "it is considered a felicitous plant because it absorbs the vapors of the earth."[1] When dried it is very durable, and is therefore used as one of the many emblems of longevity.

The *ju-i*, or "scepter," a design constantly seen on brocades, bronzes, and porcelains, alone as a mark or as a border, derives its peculiar form from the fungus.

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[1] Berthold Laufer, *Jade*, p. 209.

KOMBU
(Seaweed)

The *kombu* is one of the New Year's symbols, suggesting joy and gladness. This meaning is derived from the pun *yorokobu*, "to rejoice."

SHIDA
(Fern)

The fern is one of the New Year's symbols.[1] Several fronds are attached to the *shime-nawa*, or straw rope, or are hung above the *kami-dana*, the shelf for the household gods. It is a symbol "of the hope of exuberant prosperity; even as it branches and rebranches, so may the happy family increase and multiply through the generations."

[1] *Urajiro* or *Moromoki* are sometimes given as the species of fern used.

Fern (Crest)

Part Two

ANIMALS AND FABULOUS CREATURES

PART II

ANIMALS AND FABULOUS CREATURES

Mythological zoölogy has perhaps been developed to a more remarkable extent by the Chinese than by any other nation. Their literature teems with strange conceits, some of which appear to be transcripts of local folklore; others are accepted as sober facts of natural history. Nearly all have been adopted by the Japanese, who have utilized them as a basis for a rich fund of comic or dramatic essay, by author and artist; in fact, almost the whole of the anthropological and zoölogical curiosities rendered familiar to us through the modern art works of Japan, are of Chinese origin, but although the credit of invention rests with the Chinese, almost everything that makes the treatment of the theme amusing or interesting belongs to Japan.[1]

The list of these strange creatures is long, but they are frequently depicted. Hokusai's *Mangwa* is replete with examples, including the dragon, *kirin*, *hō-ō*, *kara-shishi*, *kappa*, *tengu*, *shōjō*, the nine-tailed fox, the stomachless man, the tailed man, the perforated man. The heads of the long-necked people "have the power of quitting the trunk, retaining only a filamentous bond of connection"; the faceless maiden's undulating form seen from behind tempts the wayfarer to gallantries that only bring upon him the shock of ghastly discovery; the *rokuro-kubi* has the faculty of elongating its neck so that its head appears in places remote from the frame to which it is attached.

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[1] William Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of a Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, p. 57.

It is one of the most unpleasant of the many weird objects with which the Japanese little ones, who are conscious of past misdemeanors, may expect to be confronted in the dim flickering of the midnight lamp — as a ghastly semi-asphyxiated head at the end of a long, snaky neck grinning at him over the top of the screens or gliding through the windows to pick up earthworms in the garden, while the appertaining body lies profoundly reposing in some distant corner of the room or house.[1]

These descriptions show the exaggerated forms that have been developed by the primitive quality of the oriental imagination, and from a love of the weird and the grotesque. On the other hand, it may be that the prevalent use of the animal form in Buddhist art is due to the doctrine of transmigration; indeed, animals are frequently shown in adoration before the Buddha or before the sacred relics and holy places of the faith, in order, perhaps, to attain a better incarnation.

It is not impossible that these types introduced from Western Asia were explained Indian fashion — *i.e.*, in each degree of animal existence was hidden a human one which would be attained by good works and which then might lead to deliverance.[2]

TATSU
(Dragon)

The dragon is a fabulous animal common to the conceptions of all races.

The Hebrews had their *tan* or *tannim*, which the translators of the English version of the Bible have rendered by the various terms of sea-monsters, whales, serpents, and dragons. The Greeks also had a dragon, a hydra, and a python; all dreadful to behold and possessing a fearful power of destruction; terms alluding to a similar being are also to be found in almost every modern

[1] William Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of a Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, p. 57.
[2] Albert Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 52.

tongue. We also find that the Hindus and Chinese have each their dragon, in the main corresponding to the western nations.[1]

Many theories have been advanced concerning its origin. It has been suggested that it may represent a vague memory of some prehistoric monster; again, that it may be a modified form of the alligator found in the River Yangtse.

It is considered the representative, *par excellence,* of the watery element. That it should typify Spring, Rain, and Flood is consistent with its identification with the alligator, for the latter's emergence from hibernation synchronizes with the coming of spring and the rainy season. As an emblem of royalty the dragon has been used from earliest times. Why it should have this meaning is not apparent, unless as bringer of rain it was regarded by an agricultural people as of paramount importance.[2]

As known in Japan, the conception is undoubtedly derived from the products of the imagination of the early Chinese, who were especially fond of evolving supernatural forms by combining parts of various animals.

The dragon heads the Chinese list of the three hundred and sixty scaly animals, though it is in reality a composite monster. It is essentially a serpent, "with the horns of a deer, the head of a horse, eyes like a devil, neck like a snake, belly like that of a red worm, scales like those of a carp, ears like a cow, paws like a tiger, and claws like an eagle."[3] It has flame-like appendages on shoulders and hips. On either foot are three, four, or five claws — the imperial dragon of China has five, that of Japan three. It is all-powerful, for it is possessed of the strongest characteristics of each of the crea-

1 S. Wells Williams, *Chinese Repository,* VII (1838), p. 253.
2 W. P. Yetts, *Symbolism in Chinese Art,* p. 23.
3 Quoted by Bowes, Griffis, and others from Bakin, an old Japanese author.

tures from which it is formed. It is believed by some to be born of the carp who are successful in ascending a cataract. These fish are rewarded for their perseverance by being caught up in a white cloud and reborn as dragons. The dragon lives on earth, but at the spring equinox it ascends to heaven, and during the autumn equinox it lives in the deep waters. When it breathes, its breath changes to a cloud, upon which it ascends to heaven. "It eats swallows' flesh, for which reason, when people pray to the rain-dragon for rain, they throw swallows into the air."[1]

Dragons are of many colors: yellow, green, white, red, or black. When the white dragon breathes, its breath turns to gold; the spittle of the violet dragon turns to crystal balls. The dragon is swift —

for an arrow in its flight is known as the *Riu-riu;* it is noble, for a horse is called *Riu-me;* it is powerful, for the *Riu-ō* or Dragon King governs the rain; it is the keystone of an arch, for it is by *Riu-dzu* or dragon's head that temple bells are suspended; it is combative, for the imperial chariot is called *Riu-sha;* its brains are likened to fragrant camphor, which is known as *Riu-no;* and the precious gentian is called *Riu-tan;* it is a god, for it is designated *Riu-jin,* the Dragon God.[2]

It is emblematic of sovereignty, and is a symbol of the Mikado whose face is called the dragon face, *Riu-ga;* whose garments are spoken of as dragon robes; and whose seat is known as the dragon throne. The scales of the dragon lie in one direction, save those on its breast; if this is touched, the monster is instantly infuriated, and strikes a death-blow. It is considered a breach of decorum to mention the anger of the Mikado, but one may say *geki-rin,* meaning "reverse scales!"

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[1] S. Wells Williams, *Chinese Repository,* VII, p. 252.
[2] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery,* p. 482.

The dragon never shows its whole body; Confucius said of Lao Tsŭ that he was like a dragon, for one could never grasp his whole personality.

The dragon is the fifth sign of the zodiac and gives its name to one of the points of the compass (the eastern quadrant), and to certain days of the year.

At every birth nine dragons are born.

The first young dragon sings, and likes all harmonious sounds, hence the top of Japanese bells are cast in the form of this dragon; the second delights in the sound of musical instruments, hence the *koto,* or horizontal harp, and the *suzumi,* a girl's drum struck with the fingers, are ornamented with the figure of this dragon; the third is fond of drinking, therefore goblets and drinking-cups are adorned with representations of this creature; the fourth likes steep and dangerous places, hence gables, towers, and projecting beams of temples and pagodas have carved images of this dragon upon them; the fifth is a great destroyer of living things, fond of killing and bloodshed, therefore swords are decorated with golden images of this dragon; the sixth loves learning and delights in literature, hence on the covers and title-pages of books and literary works are pictures of this creature; the seventh is renowned for its power of hearing; the eighth enjoys sitting, hence easy-chairs are carved in its image; the ninth loves to bear weight, therefore the feet of tables and hibachi are shaped like this creature's feet.[1]

In Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, the dragon plays an important part, either as the guardian of the faith, and protector of sacred places under the direction of the Bodhisats and the disciples of Buddha, or as a malevolent creature, to be converted or subdued. As an enemy of mankind it is conquered by the Chinese emperor Kao-Tsu. In scenes from the life of Buddha it is present in the form of the Dragon

[1] W. E. Griffis, *The Mikado's Empire,* p. 480.

King at the baptism of Gautama, and is among the mourners at his death. The dragon emerges from the sea at the command of Kwannon, and it is the steed of the goddess Benten.

Dragons are the attendants and sentinels of Kai Riu O, the Dragon King of the World under the Sea. The crystal ball, which is a form of the *tama* or sacred gem, besides symbolizing the spirit or divine essence of the gods, also typifies the force that controls the ebb and flow of the tides. The eager desire of the dragons to possess the jewel, which was once their own, and which was wrested from their realm by mortals, is told in many ways in oriental art and legend. They are frequently drawn either warring for or guarding it.

The dragon is the spirit of change, therefore of life itself. We associate him with the supreme power, or that sovereign cause which pervades everything, taking new forms according to its surroundings, yet never seen in a final shape. It is the great mystery itself. Hidden in the caverns of inaccessible mountains, or coiled in the unfathomed depth of the sea, he awaits the time when he slowly rouses himself into activity. He unfolds himself in the storm clouds; he washes his mane in the darkness of the seething whirlpools. His claws are in the fork of the lightning, his scales begin to glisten in the bark of rain-swept pine trees. His voice is heard in the hurricane which, scattering the withered leaves of the forest, quickens a new spring. The dragon reveals himself only to vanish. He is a glorious symbolic image of that elasticity which shakes off the inert mass of exhausted matter.[1]

KIRIN
(Unicorn)

The *kirin*[2] is a creature of the imagination, and is akin, probably, to the unicorn of occidental antiquity. It figures

[1] Kakuzo Okakura, *The Awakening of Japan*, p. 78.

[2] *Ki* signifies male, and *lin* (Chinese) or *rin* (Japanese), female. Similarly, in the following article, *hō* signifies male, and *ō*, female.

in the oldest examples of Chinese art, and is difficult to distinguish from the *lung-ma*, or dragon-horse, which emerged from the Yellow River and revealed to Fuh-hi (2852–2738 B.C.) the mystic tablet bearing the first symbols of the Yang and Yin, by which the Chinese philosophers attempted to explain all the mysteries of Nature.

It is said to be composed of the essence of the five elements. It is represented with the body, legs, and cloven hoofs of a deer, and the head and breast of a dragon. From its joints and tail flames are emitted, and upon its forehead is a horn like that of the unicorn. Its body is scaled like a fish to represent the element of water. The horn of the *kirin* is covered with flesh, which is said to show that the creature, though able to fight, prefers peace.

The *kirin* is thought to be born of a dragon and a cow; its conception and birth require the appearance of a special constellation in the sky, and the birth of a saint upon earth. Like the *hō-ō* (*q.v.*), it appears only when great events occur, and it "is believed to forbode the appearance in this world of excellent princes and leaders"—of some great emperor or king. The *kirin* appeared when Confucius was writing his *History;* when he heard that it had been killed by an imperial hunting-party, he left the book unfinished.

The *kirin* is symbolic of supreme gentleness and virtue, for it takes special care not to tread upon or injure the smallest plant or the tiniest insect.

HO-O
(Phoenix)

The *hō-ō*, which may be called a phoenix, heads the list of the three hundred and sixty feathered animals. It is found in the earliest wall decorations of China, and was first depicted

as an immense eagle carrying large animals in its claws—like the Greek *gryphon*, the Indian *garuda*, and the Persian *rukh*. Later, it was endowed with beautiful, colored feathers, and became the *feng-hwang* of China.

In China and Japan it is now considered a bird of royalty, and is supposed to abide in the higher regions. Its plumage is magnificent, resembling that of both the peacock and the pheasant. It has the head of the pheasant, the beak of the swallow, and the features of a dragon or of a fish. A Chinese description is as follows: The *feng-hwang* is the essence of fire; it is born in the vermilion cave; it perches only on the *kiri;* its body is adorned with five colors (symbolizing the five virtues: obedience, uprightness of mind, fidelity, justice, and benevolence); its song contains five notes; it eats only the seed of the bamboo, and drinks only from a sacred spring; as it walks it looks around; as it flies hosts of birds follow it.

The Chinese mystics believe it to symbolize the entire world: its head is the heaven; its eyes, the sun; its back, the crescent moon; its wings, the wind; its feet, the earth; its tail, the trees and the plants.

The *hō-ō* is used as an emblem of the empress, as the dragon is an emblem of the emperor. The emperor's carriage is called *Ho-ren*. In China, brides are allowed to wear a head-dress in the shape of the *feng-hwang*.

KAPPA
(Goblin)

The *kappa* is a goblin of rivers and lakes, and is strongest when in the water. It is the size, and something of the shape, of a boy five or six years old, but is usually represented with a body like that of the tortoise, with hairy or scaly legs, and with an apish head. This last is hollowed in the center of

the cranium to form a cup which contains a fluid, and in this fluid lies the power and strength of the creature.

The *kappa* is vicious and troublesome, and being fond of fresh blood is greatly feared by travelers. While its disposition is quarrelsome, it prides itself on being extremely polite. A story is told of a wayfarer who was challenged by a *kappa* to single combat. Before beginning the conflict an obeisance was required. The traveler, being courageous, bowed his head before the goblin, and the *kappa*, surprised at this unexpected courage, felt compelled to obey the laws of politeness, and also bowed his head, thereby losing its strength-giving fluid. As a result it became weak and feeble and unable to seize the traveler, who escaped unharmed. It is said that the *kappa* is inclined to imitate everything, so that to overcome it one needs but shake one's head violently — the creature will immediately do likewise, and at once becomes harmless.

TENGU
(Bird-man)

The *tengu* is half man, half bird, with wings and claws, sometimes a beak and sometimes an extremely elongated nose. This last prominent feature the Japanese artist — always with an eye for the grotesque — puts to good use as a carrying-pole. Hokusai, in one of his inimitable drawings, shows a pair of *tengu* carrying their lunch; the exaggeratedly long nose of one rests upon the shoulder of his companion who walks in front, and upon the nose hangs the lunch-box!

Tengu move through the air, and travel great distances with ease. Goblin-shaped as they are, and fantastic almost beyond description, they are considered as lesser divinities. They live in the mountains, in the topmost branches of trees,

and are believed to be the messengers of the god of the mountains. They are very strong, and can break the largest trees with a single stroke. They are familiar with the secrets of the birds and beasts, and are skilled in the art of fencing and in the use of all weapons. Legend tells that Yoshitsune, a famous hero of Japan, was taught the art of warfare by a friendly *tengu.*[1]

To the ivory-carver, especially the *netsuké*-maker, the birth of the *tengu* is a favorite subject. The creatures are shown rolling their enormous eggs or as having just emerged from the shell.

It is difficult to understand why these curious beings should have been chosen by the old Chinese philosophers to represent the male and female elements.

SHOJO
(Ape-man)

The earliest descriptions of the *shōjō* is found in an old Chinese work on natural history — a fact that is somewhat misleading, as *shōjō* are purely imaginary creatures. They are half ape and half man, with long, straight, red hair, from which it is believed a valuable dye may be extracted. They live near the sea or, according to some writers, come up from the bottom of the sea to revel on shore. They have an inordinate love of *saké*, and fishermen are said to take advantage of this weakness, and entrap them by placing jars of *saké* on the seashore. There is a Japanese saying: "As drunk as a *shōjō*," and these creatures are held up to the youth of Japan as an example of the ill effects of intoxicants. *Shōjō* are

[1] For an interesting account of Yoshitsune and the *tengu*, see Yei Theodora Ozaki, *Warriors of Old Japan*, pp. 51–75.

usually shown in groups, with huge *saké* cups and dippers; sometimes they are asleep near a *saké* jar, or float lazily about on the waves in a *saké* bowl as a boat.

ONI
(Demons)

Oni are mischievous little demons that haunt the precincts of home and temple. They are represented with claws, sharp teeth, malignant eyes overshadowed by prominent brows, and from their square heads protrude two small horns. They are short of stature, and sometimes wear a tiger skin about their bodies. They are often shown marching at night in bands of hundreds, in imitation of religious processions. *Oni* occasionally become converted, and priests are depicted sawing off their horns. They are then enlisted as temple guardians and are employed to beat the temple drums. According to the teachings of Buddha, even demons may be reclaimed by becoming temple servants.

On the ends of the roof-rafters of Buddhist temples may be seen the *oni-kawara*, or demon-tiles. Originally, these evil-looking carved heads were not intended to represent demons (in the Buddhist sense of the term), but guardian spirits whose duty it was to drive away evil spirits. As the first roof-tiles used in Japan were made by a Korean priest, shortly after the introduction of Buddhism, they are probably of Korean origin, for in Korea their prototypes are commonly seen, not only on temple roofs, but also on the roofs of houses and of gateways.

In Japan, on the last day of the year, a ceremony of exorcism is considered necessary. This is called *Oni-yarai*, "the casting out of devils." Certain Buddhist sutras are recited, the *shakujo* is rattled, and dried beans are thrown

about the house in four directions. For some reason, *oni* have an aversion for dried beans, and disappear at sight of them.

KARA-SHISHI
(Lion)

The lion was not indigenous to China, and it is not mentioned in the oldest records, but there have been two types represented in Chinese art—both derived from foreign sources.

The older and more natural form, seen on objects made during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–221 A.D.), was probably derived from Scythian and Siberian art, which, in turn, came from Mycenae and Greece. This form exercised its influence for a brief period, "but soon sank into oblivion—and quite naturally, since this animal was not familiar to the mass of the Chinese people, and thus lacked popularity."

The more familiar form is copied from the fanciful conceptions of Buddhistic India. This conventionalized creature which followed "in the trail of Buddhism, had a much better chance to endure, as here the religious idea upheld its representation in art, and its numerous connections with the legends woven around Buddha and the saints deeply appealed to the popular mind."[1] This strange animal has played a curious part in the religion of Buddha, and has many names. It is called the *Kara-shishi* (*kara*, meaning "China," and *shishi*, meaning "lion"); *Koma-inu*, the Korean dog; *Ama-inu*, the heavenly dog; and The Dog of Foo (Foo meaning Buddha).

Though grotesquely modified, its general aspect suggests the lion. Its hideous, grinning face, curly mane, and bushy, flamelike tail, are familiar objects before both Buddhist and Shinto shrines, and before temples, palaces, and tombs. The

[1] Berthold Laufer, *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, p. 244.

kara-shishi are not gods to be worshiped, but are the guardians of sacred places, and are symbols of divine protection. They are often colored, one blue, and one green; and are placed in pairs, male and female — the male with his mouth open, and the female with her mouth closed. Lafcadio Hearn writes:

> It seems to be the immemorial artistic law of the demeanor of all symbolic guardians of holy places, such as the *Kara-shishi,* the *Kitsune,* and the Ascending and Descending Dragons, carved upon panels and pillars — to be represented with the male grinning, with open jaws, and the female demure, with mouth closed. . . . . The male figure in such representations is supposed to be pronouncing the sound *A,* and the figure with closed lips, the letter *N,* corresponding to the alpha and omega of the Greek alphabet, and emblematic of the Beginning and the End. In the *Lotus of the Good Law,* Buddha reveals himself as the cosmic Alpha and Omega.[1]

The *kara-shishi* is often represented playing with the ball or *tama.* The *tama* stands for the sacred emanations of the gods, and the Dog of Foo is thus shown as the defender of this precious symbol.

TORA
(Tiger)

By the Japanese the tiger is considered more as a symbol than as a zoölogical reality, and is drawn in accordance with a type handed down by the old Chinese artists. It is sometimes included in the list of fabulous animals with the dragon, the *kirin,* and the *kara-shishi.* Among the various astronomical and geometrical representations of the cosmic deities given in the lists of ritual implements and symbols of the early Chou and Han dynasties in China (1169–206 B.C.), an image of

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* pp. 338-339.

the tiger is mentioned as the emblem of the cardinal palace of the West. This is important, as it is the first example in China of other than a purely geometrical conception of deity.

At the beginning of summer the tiger cubs are born, and during the warm summer months they remain in the mountains; but in the autumn they come down to the plains and are seen by men. Hence the tiger is the zodiacal sign for summer, while the severities of autumn are symbolized by the same animal in its full strength.

The tiger is believed to have had its origin in one of the stars of the Great Bear, and Chinese naturalists say that because of this origin it has the power of exciting the winds, and that it is an incarnation of the thunder. "The clouds obey the dragon and the winds the tiger." It is regarded as the master of the animal kingdom, for "its roar was so strong that it seemed like a voice from another world."[1] It is also symbolic of the *Yang*, or the masculine and active principle in Nature. It is said to live for a thousand years, and when half of its term of life has passed its hair becomes white — it is thus that the Chinese accounted for the two varieties of tiger, the yellow with black stripes and the white with black stripes. The latter variety is very rare and is endowed with the more extraordinary powers — it is the saddle-beast of the immortals!

Representations of the tiger are painted on the screens before the doors of magistrates, to produce in all who approach a feeling of awe and terror. Similarly, they are placed on the gates of homes and of temples, as a symbol of bravery, for this creature of mighty strength is believed to dispel and devour demons. The tiger is honored by gamblers, and draw-

[1] Charles de Harlez, *Le livre des esprits et des immortels*, p. 457.

ings of it, holding money in its front paws, are hung in gambling halls and incense is burned before them.

As early as five hundred years before Christ the tiger and dragon were depicted together, each symbolizing power. Subsequently this idea of power developed into a more elaborate symbolism, and the tiger is often drawn forcing its way through the luxurious and poisonous undergrowth of the jungle (which signifies sin), symbolizing Will overcoming Evil. Crouching beside a clump of bamboo during a storm, the tiger is symbolic of the power of faith.

Soldiers and heroes are often represented sitting upon a tiger's skin; this suggests the thought that man must attain a great name in order that some part of him may live on after death, for even the tiger leaves his precious skin!

ZO
(Elephant)

The elephant is not a native of Japan, but the Chinese and Japanese artists — especially the ivory-carvers — represent it "in almost every possible position, as standing, walking, running, sitting down, eating, drinking, throwing water over its own back, or kneeling down in reverence before the holy Bodhi tree."[1] Sometimes Buddha, as a child, is borne upon the back of an elephant which is in the act of presenting a lotus flower to him with its trunk.

As a symbol, it comes, through a maze of legend, from Indian Buddhistic sources.[2] According to the old stories, "when it came time for the Bodhisat to leave the Tushita heaven, and be born upon earth as Gautama Buddha, he

[1] M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 525.

[2] On the question of the migration of symbols from India to Japan, see Kakuzo Okakura, *The Ideals of the East*, Introduction.

descended into the womb of his mother in the form of a white elephant."[1] The elephant is the Mount of Fugen, the beloved Bosatsu, who sits upon the left hand of the Buddha.

USHI
(Ox)

The ox, in a recumbent position, is an emblem of Ten-jin, the great minister and scholar who lived in the ninth century. Ten-jin is worshiped as the god of calligraphy. He was banished to the island of Kyushu, and during his exile he rode about upon an ox. To this day a student has upon his deity-shelf the image of an ox, and each year that he pursues his studies he places a new silken cushion beneath it.

The ox is also associated with the peach, and sometimes the Sennin are shown riding upon it. It is emblematic of the Zen sect, and it is the second sign of the zodiac.

UMA
(Horse)

The horse is emblematic of manhood. It is frequently drawn by Japanese artists, and is often delineated with as few brush strokes as possible. A pictorial pun on the word *baka*—*baka* means "foolish"; also, *ba* means "horse," and *ka* "stag"—is made by street artists. It is a depiction of a horse and a stag. Allusion is made to the act of the prime minister at the court of the Chinese Emperor who was the son of the illustrious builder of the Great Wall. He declared that a stag could be called a horse, and a horse a stag. The courtiers were compelled to obey him, and thus originated the word *baka*.

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[1] M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 525.

To dream of a horse is considered a lucky omen, but it signifies traveling. Astrologically, the horse is of importance, and it is the seventh sign of the zodiac. It is often drawn with the rat, the horse representing the first hour of the day, and the rat, the first hour of the night. The horse forms the crest of the Princes of Soma, where the animal is shown attached to a couple of pegs, and kicking high with its hind legs.

SHIKA
(Deer)

Gautama Buddha was believed to have been born eleven times as a deer, and to have delivered his first sermon in a deer-park, so it is not strange that this gentle animal is of importance as a Buddhist symbol. It has also been adopted by the Shintoists as the messenger of the god of the Kasuga shrine, and a large number of tame deer are kept in the park around the temple. The association of the white stag with the god of longevity is probably of Chinese origin. In Japan, it is represented with Fuku-roku-ju and Ju-ro-jin.

The primitive Japanese used the scorched shoulder-blade of a deer for purposes of divination; in the cracks made by heat on the flat surface of the bone, omens were read, and the answers of the gods to the questions of the people were discerned. At a later period, the shell of the tortoise was used for the same purpose.

KITSUNE
(Fox)

The conception of the fox as a supernatural being was introduced into Japan from China, probably during the tenth century; since then the idea has grown and spread until

throughout the empire there are perhaps more shrines erected to Inari (*q.v.*), the Rice God, and his messenger, the fox, than to any other deity.

The origin of the connection of the fox with Inari is obscure. Inari is to the common people one of the most important of the Shinto deities, having many attributes and as many vocations. He is worshiped as the god of rice, as a healer, and as one having the power to give wealth. Originally, the fox was merely sacred to him, but the simple worship of the god has been overshadowed in many provinces by a weird fox-cult, and the images of Inari have been replaced by thousands of stone, clay, and wooden fox images, in all sizes and varieties. They are monstrous, grotesque, sinister, apathetic, or whimsical. As with the *kara-shishi*, the male *kitsune* is represented with the mouth open, and the female with mouth closed. The end of the tail is sometimes decorated with the *tama*, or symbolic jewel. The fox is also regarded, sometimes, as the guardian of the official seals and of wealth. As such it has in its mouth or at its feet the *kagi*, or key to the go-down or treasure house (*q.v.*).

Japanese stories abound in ghostly superstition woven about this stealthy animal, and strange are the beliefs entertained concerning it. Its characteristic cunning and deceit and its habit of slyly sneaking about at the twilight hour have laid hold of the imagination of the simple country folk. Terrible are the tales still told of the goblin foxes who assume the form of beautiful women in order to enslave men; who bewitch incautious travelers; who attach themselves to families in ghostly bands, and make the family so afflicted a terror to the neighborhood; who enter into men, women, and children, and cause the strange "fox madness." Even now, among the peasantry, cases are reported of fox possessions, although the

schools, by the teaching of the natural sciences, have done much to abolish these fearsome fancies.[1]

TANUKI
(Badger)

The *tanuki*, loved both by story-teller and comic artist, is, like the fox, endowed with the power of assuming at will forms other than his own. It is, however, more a player of practical jokes than a vicious deceiver.

When the moon is in the sky the badger changes itself into the shape of the moon and plays pranks on credulous young people. The tale of the badger and the magic tea-kettle is a popular and frequently depicted story. Laughable drawings are also often seen of the badger tapping his enormously protuberant abdomen.

BAKU
(Tapir)

The tapir is not a native of Japan, nor of the Asiatic continent generally, but is found on the Malayan peninsula. It is a shy, inoffensive animal of nocturnal habits, and has come to Japan with other bits of Malayan folklore. Its head is carved as a support for the lintels of the doors and gateways of Japanese temples, for it is believed to be a protection against pestilence. It figures on the quilts under which the country folk sleep, and is drawn on slips of paper and folded around their wooden pillows, for it is thought that it will swallow bad dreams and turn them into good ones. Children

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[1] See B. H. Chamberlain, *Things Japanese;* Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* chap. xv; "Fox Possession in Japan," *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* XIII (1900), pp. 222–225.

are taught to call out, after an unpleasant dream: "Tapir, come eat; tapir, come eat."[1]

On the sail of the *Takara-bune*, or Ship of Good Fortune, is drawn the Chinese character for *baku*, referring to the early significance of the ship.

SARU
(Monkey)

Japanese folklore abounds in stories of the monkey, and there are manifold representations of it in art: the long-armed ones, the red-faced variety, and the well-known "three mystic monkeys," who are the messengers of Koshin, the God of Roads (*q.v.*). Throughout Japan, by every roadside, the image of the god is seen with his servants, or more frequently the three monkeys alone. They are Mi-saru, who covers his eyes with his hands and sees no evil; Kika-saru, who covers his ears with his hands and hears no evil, and Iwa-saru, who covers his mouth with his hands and speaks no evil. Besides being messengers of the god Koshin, these strange little beings carry to all men a simple message of right living.

The group of long-armed monkeys, *yenko*, or Chinese apes, clinging one to another, refers to a parable, said to have been told by the Buddha himself. Some of these apes came upon a well under a tree, and were enamored of the image of the moon in the water. They resolved to catch the bright apparition. One ape suspended himself from a branch by his tail, the second ape clung to the first, the third to the second, until the long chain of apes reached the water. Suddenly, however, the branch broke, and the apes were drowned!

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[1] The interesting problem presented by the appearance of the tapir in the art of Mexico is discussed by Edward B. Tylor, *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, p. 313.

HARE IN THE MOON

As the Buddhists say: "The water is the phantom flux of sensations and ideas; the moon, not the distorted image, is the sole truth. In this world of illusion, man is truly still the ape, trying to seize on water, the shadow of the moon."[1]

The monkey is the ninth sign of the zodiac.

USAGI
(Hare)

The Sanskrit word for moon — *cacadharas,* meaning "one who carries the hare" — suggests the ancient origin of the familiar combination. Legends of the hare and the moon are to be found in the folklore of all parts of the world, for there is a fancied resemblance between the form of the animal and the outline of the visible marks on the moon. Whether the legends grew from the resemblance, or the latter was discovered after the myths had been formed, it is impossible to tell.

Taoist lore abounds in descriptions of the hare who stands in the moon pounding, with his mortar and pestle, the drugs for the *elixir vitae;* and it is by the light of the full moon that herbalists must gather the plants with which to compound this elixir. In Japan, the substance which the hare prepares in his mortar is the *mochi* of which the rice-cakes are made that are used as offerings in both Shinto and Buddhist shrines. The words *mochi* and *mochi-zuki* mean respectively "rice-cake" and "full moon."

The hare belongs to the group of supernaturally long-lived animals, though it is not one of the many emblems of longevity. It is said to live a thousand years, and its hair turns white when half of its term of life is over. If the moon

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Exotics and Retrospectives,* p. 184. This story is of foreign origin. It is included in *Tibetan Tales, Derived from Indian Sources,* trans. by F. Anton von Schiefner, p. 353.

is clear on the eighteenth night of the eighth month, the rabbit conceives by running upon the surface of the waves, but should the sky be dark and the moon veiled with clouds, impregnation does not occur.

The story of the unselfish hare is one of the most commonly known of Buddhist birth-stories, and this also connects the animal with the moon. Told by Gautama Buddha, it is as follows:

In one of my lives I was a hare living in a forest. I ate grass and did no one any harm. An ape, a jackal, and an otter lived with me. I used to teach them their duties and to tell them to abstain from evil and to give alms in the four fast days in every month. They did as I told them, and gave beans, corn, and rice. Then I said to myself: "Suppose a worthy object of charity passed by, what can I give him? I live on grass only; I cannot offer a starving man grass, I must give him myself!" Thereupon the god Sakka (Indra), wishing to test my sincerity, came in a Brahman's form and asked me for food. When I saw him I said joyfully: "A noble gift will I give thee, O Brahma; thou observest the precepts; thou painest no creature; thou wilt not kill me for food. But go collect wood, place it in a heap, and kindle a fire. Then will I roast myself and thou mayest eat me!" He said: "So be it," and went and gathered the wood and kindled a fire. When the wood began to send forth flame, I leapt into the midst of the blazing fire. As water quenches heat, so the flames quelled all the sufferings of life. Cuticle and skin, flesh and sinews, bones, ligaments, and heart — my whole body with all its limbs I gave to the Brahman!" [1]

As a reward for this extrem sacrifice, the hare was transported to the moon.

The *usagi* is the fourth sign of the zodiac.

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[1] Adapted from Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 278.

NEZUMI
(Rat)

The rat, though it infests Japan, is a favorite with the Japanese artist. It is associated with Daikoku, the God of Wealth. Daikoku's festival falls on the "day of the rat," and this gives a simple explanation for the choice of his attribute. Other reasons have also been suggested: Daikoku is shown with an immense treasure-sack, and is usually standing upon bales of rice, symbols of wealth, with rats either nibbling at the bales or slyly standing near. It has been said that the rat is added to show that all wealth must be watched and protected from thievery.

The rat is the first sign of the zodiac.

KOMORI
(Bat)

The symbolism of the bat has come to Japan from China, where, though written with a different character, the word for "bat" has the same sound as *fuh*, "happiness." It has, therefore, become one of the most commonly used art motives. The five bats, drawn in various groupings, signify the five happinesses: longevity, riches, peacefulness, love of virtue, and a happy death. In Japan, there are ten or twelve varieties of this animal, and its peculiarly formed wings are woven into designs on porcelains and embroideries.

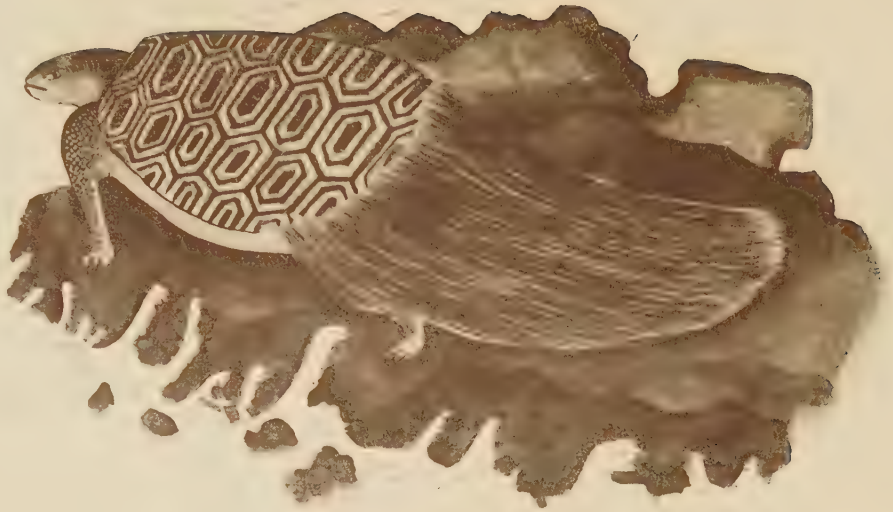
KAME
(Tortoise)

The tortoise is a favorite symbol of longevity, and two mythological varieties of it are represented in art. One, simply drawn in the natural form of the animal, is supposed to live for a thousand years; the other is depicted with a long,

hairy tail which the tortoise is said to acquire at the age of ten thousand years. This tail, or rather a number of small tails, trailing behind like the fringes of a straw rain-coat, accounts for the name of this second variety — *mino-game*, *mino* meaning "rain-coat," and *game* or *kame* meaning "tortoise." Specimens of the tortoise are kept in tanks in the grounds of the Buddhist temples, and live to a great age. Water-plants attach themselves to the shells of the animal, and stream behind when they walk or swim. The myth of the *mino-game* is supposed to have had its origin in the efforts of the older artists to represent the appearance of such tortoises with water-plants fastened upon them.

The form of the candlesticks, commonly seen with a stork or crane standing upon the back of a tortoise, may possibly be derived from an old Chinese phrase: "May your days be as long as those of the tortoise and the stork." The idea, however, of the tortoise as a support for various things is, in all probability, tinged with Hindu thought, for the broad concave shell corresponds with the ancient conception of the shape of the world. In China, the tortoise was frequently sculptured in stone as the support of huge monumental tablets, and there is a legend that tells of the tortoise carrying an elephant, upon whose back rests the terrestrial world. In Japan, it is sometimes depicted bearing upon its back the mountain abode of the immortals, or, occasionally, the treasure mountain on which are the precious *tama*, the mystic jewels which are employed by the queen of the world under the sea to control the ebb and flow of the tides. The dragon is the messenger of the king of this realm beneath the waves, and the tortoise is the messenger of the queen.

The tortoise is said to be descended from the dragon. It is believed to conceive by thought alone, and to have the



LONG-TAILED TORTOISE

power of creating with its breath a cloud, a fog, or a magnificent palace. In popular mythology the tortoise is the servant of the God Kompira. If a devout fisherman catches a tortoise he writes upon its shell: "Servant of the deity Kompira," and, giving it a drink of *saké*, puts its back into the sea! The Dragon Princess, in the beautiful legend of Urashima, appears to the fisher-boy on the back of a tortoise.

As an emblem of longevity, the *kame* is constantly associated with Fuku-roku-ju (*q.v.*), and with the old man and woman who are the spirits of the Pine Trees of Takasago.

The custom of using the shell of the tortoise in the practice of divination was brought from China, and superseded the use of the shoulder-blade of the deer.

HEBI
(Serpent)

The serpent is of symbolic importance in Japan, but the Buddhistic attitude towards it differs from the familiar Hebraic idea. The veneration of certain animals is a curious element in primitive religions, and is intimately related to totemism. In Buddhistic countries, however, the totemistic identification of the individual with the animal has been replaced by the idea of transmigration — the passing of the soul from one existence to another, animal as well as human. Attempts to express this idea have given rise to various strange combinations of the animal and human form.

The *Nagas*, a class of snake-gods, were much revered in India, and, in scenes from the life of the Buddha, could only be represented properly as in part human. So, in art, human bodies are found with snake heads, and snake bodies with human heads, or an entire human body with a snake or snakes,

usually hooded, springing from the back of the human head as an ornament.

The *Naga* in human form, with the snake's hood, has been retained in all its ramifications, and is found also in the Chino-Japanese, where snake-kings are represented as men in Chinese costume, with a dragon on the back of the neck, whose head appears over that of the human form.[1]

Water was considered the proper element for both the snake and the dragon, and probably the deep feeling of awe and love that the ancients had for this important element is accountable, in some degree, for the worship of these creatures. Benten, the Japanese Sea Goddess, is often represented with a curious head-dress in the form of a white snake with the face of an old man. Both goddess and snake can be identified with Indian mythology, and came to Japan with Buddhism. The *hakuja*, or white serpent, is called by the people "the august dragon-serpent," for it is sent by the dragon-king to announce the coming of the gods.

The sea serpent darkens and rises and roars before the coming of the white serpent. It is caught by fishermen. Only one is caught because only one is sent. It is brought to the temples. The catcher is sure to become rich.[2]

The cobra or hooded serpent is a native of India, and has been replaced, to a great extent, in Chinese and Japanese story by the dragon; its close association with Buddhistic lore has made it, nevertheless, a not infrequent subject in Japanese art. M. Monier-Williams says:

Buddha is represented in several attitudes. When shown seated upon the coils of a serpent with the outspread cobra-like

[1] Albert Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 45.
[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 185.

hood, it is termed "serpent canopied." This commemorates the legend that Gautama, when seated in meditation after his attainment of Buddhahood, was sheltered from a violent storm (some say "from the rays of the sun") by the expanded hood of the *naga* or serpent demon, while the coils of the snake were gathered under him to form a seat.[1]

Susa-no-o, the brother of the Sun Goddess, killed Uwabami, the eight-headed serpent, thereby rescuing a beautiful maiden. He then drew from the serpent's tail a sword that was kept at the temple of Isé and became one of the three sacred objects of the imperial regalia, and one of the most revered articles in Japan.

Commonly, the snake is a symbol of woman's jealousy. This is brought out in the story of Kyohime, who revenged herself by becoming transformed into a serpent and destroying her faithless lover.

Astrologically, the serpent is, in China and Japan, the sixth sign of the zodiac.

KAWAZU
(Frog)

The frog is inseparably connected with the name of Ono-no-Tōfū. The story is told that in his youth he could not master the art of calligraphy. One day, when he was strolling beside the river-bank, discouraged and downhearted, he noticed a little frog trying to reach a leaf on the hanging branch of a willow tree. The frog tried again and again, and on the seventh attempt succeeded in reaching the goal. Ono-no-Tōfū, taking this as a lesson, returned to his home, took up his brush and went to work, and soon became one of the greatest calligraphers of his time. Another version of this Bruce and the

[1] M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 480.

Spider story is that Ono-no-Tōfū, while an official under Saga (810–823 B.C.), tried seven times to attain a higher position, but without success. In despair, he left the palace and encountered the courageous little frog; he took heart and at last attained his goal. Ono-no-Tōfū and his frog are often seen on the covers of children's school-books.

A familiar proverb, applied commonly to those who know nothing of the world, but retain provincial ideas until the end, is, "The frog in the well knows not the great ocean."

EBI
(Crayfish or *Lobster)*

The lobster is one of the New Year symbols. It is placed with the orange, the fern, and the charcoal on a *sambō* before the household shrine. It is emblematic of extreme old age — the lobster's body is bent double, as is the body of one who has lived long. It expresses the wish that one's friends may live to so ripe an age that they may become bent like the lobster.

KOI
(Carp)

The carp family is very abundant in the rivers and lakes of China, and some species are reared in fish-pools and tubs to a monstrous size; fifty-two species are mentioned in Richardson's list. The gold-fish is the most celebrated, and has been introduced into Europe, where it was first seen toward the end of the seventeenth century. . . . . The effects of domestication in changing the natural form of this fish are great; specimens are often seen without any dorsal fin, and the tail and other fins are tufted and lobed to such a degree as to resemble artificial appendages or wings rather than natural organs. The eyes are developed till the globe projects beyond the socket like goggles, presenting an extraordinary appearance. The usual color is a ruddy, golden hue, but both sexes exhibit a silvery or blackish tint at certain

stages of their growth; and one variety, called the silver-fish, has this shade all its life.[1]

The Chinese and Japanese keep these beautiful fish in ponds or in large earthenware jars in which are placed rocks and water-plants.

Symbolically, the carp is of great importance. From China comes the legend that tells of the Riyomon or Dragon-Gate, a sacred place on the rivers which all the fish strive to reach and pass through by leaping the cataracts. It is believed that those who succeed are caught up to heaven in a white cloud and transformed into dragons, to live forever after in the regions of happiness above the clouds. In reality, the fish attempt to scale the waterfalls and cataracts in order to deposit their spawn in the quieter waters above. The carp, by its strength and perseverance, alone succeeds in attaining this goal. It has, therefore, become a symbol of energy, courage, and perseverance, and has been adopted as an emblem by the boys of Japan, especially by the young samurai, who endeavor to surmount all difficulties to attain success.

At the literary or military examinations, the young samurai who has passed successfully is looked upon as a fish that has attained dragonhood, and is presented with a picture of a carp in the act of jumping the waterfall.

At the Boys' Festival, celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth month (it is during this month that the carp ascends to the top of the waterfall), a large carp is made of paper or cloth and is hung over the house on a bamboo pole. The fish is so constructed that it may become inflated by the wind, and assume a lifelike appearance. Another similar fish is erected inside the house. These representations are believed

[1] S. Wells Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, Vol. I, p. 348.

to excite ambition in the youthful mind. Another old custom maintained in feudal times was the eating of the carp alive, on the sixteenth birthday of the young samurai, when he then became of age. A piece of moist paper was laid over the eyes of the fish and the flesh was then lifted from the bones, leaving the vital organs untouched, the carp remaining almost impassive during the vivisection — "giving its silent lesson to man that the most bitter and painful death must be endured for the preservation of self-respect."

TAI
(Sea Bream)

The *tai* is a red-skinned salt-water fish,[1] and is not to be confused with the frequently depicted fresh-water carp. It is abundant on the coasts of Japan, and is prized as a most delicate article of food. The Japanese call it the king of fishes.

It is always associated with Ebisu, the God of Plenty and of daily food, and is considered an emblem of good fortune. It is a ceremonial gift at weddings and on other occasions, for *-tai* is the last syllable of *o-mede-tai*, which means "congratulation."

KUJAKU
(Peacock)

The gorgeous coloring and decorative beauty of the peacock have naturally attracted the artists of all countries; as, however, it is but two centuries since the bird was introduced into Japan, the peacock is found only in modern Japanese art.

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[1] The black *tai* (*kuradai*) is also caught in Japanese waters.

[2] "Il est consacré au dieu marin Yebis, que pour sa beauté et pour l'éclat qu'il jette dans l'eau" (He is consecrated to Yebis, the god of the sea, for his beauty and for the splendor which he puts into the water). — Klaproth.

To the ancients generally the peacock was of deep significance. It was the celestial mount of the Grecian Goddess Hera and of the Etruscan Uni. To the early Hindus, the watch-star Argus became the peacock, whose tail is studded with the stars of heaven. To the first Christians it was a symbol of immortality; the church fathers gave two reasons for this — the supposed incorruptibility of its flesh, and the annual moulting and renewal of its beautiful feathers. Intermingled with all of this fanciful imagery is the old and significant belief that the peacock killed serpents.

With the exception that it is given, as a heavenly steed, to Kujako-mio-o (Maya), the mother of Buddha, and sometimes to the Goddess Benten, the peacock is used without a special meaning — that is without symbolic significance — in Japan.

KIJI OR KIGISU
(Pheasant)

Owing to its beautiful plumage, the pheasant is a favorite subject of the Japanese artist; it is often combined with the cherry blossom, probably not because of symbolic significance, but because of some early poetic association.

The pheasant symbolizes mother-love, and a woman's love for her child is called *yake-no-kigisu*, for this gaily plumaged bird exhibits tenderest affection towards its young. If a field of grain is burned, the pheasant may be seen hurriedly escaping from its burning home, carrying its young upon its back.

WASHI
(Eagle)

The eagle is seldom represented on pottery or lacquer, but it is sometimes seen on embroideries and enamels. It is, in all probability, without symbolic significance, though the fact

that it is occasionally shown in connection with the dragon, and sometimes with the imperial crest, may indicate that it is symbolic of power.

TAKA
(Falcon)

The falcon is associated with the aristocracy of Japan. Falconry was, in former days, practiced at the court of the Mikado, and almost every prince and feudal lord had his perch of hawks and his train of falconers.

The falcon is said to symbolize generosity and nobility of disposition, "for one of these birds disdained to relieve his hunger, when famished, by taking the corn of a poor farmer." A favorite *kakemono*, which is displayed during the month of December, depicts a falcon perched upon a snow-covered branch. In its claws it holds a small bird, but to the mind of the Japanese this does not convey the harrowing suggestion that the hawk is about to devour its victim. On the contrary, the nobility of the bird is again revealed — it simply thaws its frozen feet upon the warm, quivering body of its tiny prisoner and then allows its escape, pledging itself not to fly in the same direction for twenty-four hours!

The idea of victory is also associated with the falcon. Lafcadio Hearn says:

> The hawk is now likely to become, more than ever in Japan, a symbol of victory. . . . . This was because of an incident in the Chinese-Japanese war. At the close of the great naval engagement of the 17th of September, 1894, a hawk alighted on the fighting-mast of the Japanese cruiser "Takachiho" and suffered itself to be taken and fed.[1]

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Kokoro*, p. 105.

From a replica of the original painting by Keibun

MANDARIN DUCKS

OSHIDORI OR OSHI
(Mandarin Duck)

Oshidori are a species of river-duck, and from ancient times, in the Far East, these beautiful birds have been regarded as an emblem of conjugal felicity. Paintings or carvings of them are often given as wedding presents. The duck and drake are always seen together, and they are said to pine and die if one is separated from the other. An old story is told of Sanjo, a hunter and falconer. On his way home, after an unsuccessful hunting trip, he saw, as he crossed the river, a pair of *oshidori.* It is not good to kill these birds, but he was hungry and shot at them. He succeeded in killing the male, but the female escaped. That night he dreamed of a beautiful woman who came to him, mournful and accusing. The next day, as he neared the river, the female duck swam straight toward him. As he gazed at her, haunted by his dream, she suddenly tore open her breast with her beak! Sanjo shaved his head and became a priest!

GAN
(Wild Goose)

Birds were believed by the ancients to have the power to portend the coming of future events, and their flight was observed on all important occasions. In Japan, vestiges of this old custom are seen in a number of instances. Wild geese fly in long, straight lines, and it is commonly believed that this line is broken only when the birds become uneasily conscious of an unusual presence or circumstance beneath them. A story is told of the warrior Yoshi-iye, who was warned by a broken line of *gan* that his enemies were hidden in a bed of rushes. These birds are considered, therefore, as emblematic of caution.

The *gan* are often represented with rushes, and are shown flying with them in their beaks. When weary, they drop the rushes on the water and alight upon them. Their long flights during the migratory season have given rise to poetic fancies:

What bark impelled by autumn's fresh'ning gale
Comes speeding toward me? 'Tis the wild geese driv'n
Across the fathomless expanse of heaven,
And lifting up their voices for a sail!

CHIDORI
(Sea-bird)

Flights of sea-birds[1] are often drawn by the Japanese artist, in landscapes and flying over the waves. For ages their plaintive cry has affected the poet. Depicted with waves — *nami-ni-chi-dori* — they are suggestive of solitude.

Prince Genji sang the following verses when lying sleepless upon his bed:

Although on a lonely couch I lie
Without a mate, yet still so near,
At dawn, the cries of chidori,
With their fond mates, 'tis sweet to hear.

TSURU
(Crane)

The *tsuru*, the bird of picture and story, is one of the commonest emblems of longevity, and Chinese and Japanese legends alike are replete with curious fancies concerning it.

The Chinese call it *ho*, and it is considered by them "the patriarch of the feathered tribe and the aerial courser of

[1] "Thus *chidori* is the name of any kind of sand-piper, plover, or dotterel." — *Ko-ji-ki, or Records of Ancient Matters*, trans. by B. H. Chamberlain, Introduction, p. XLVII.

the immortals. Human beings have repeatedly been changed into its shape, and it constantly manifests an interest in human affairs."[1] The crane is said to live to a fabulous age, and when six hundred years old to drink, but no longer eat. After two thousand years it turns black.

In Japan, it is revered as a sacred bird. In former years its killing was prohibited by royal edict. Kaempher wrote of his visit to the country in 1690:

> I never heard the people call this bird anything but *O Tsuru-san,* "My great Lord Crane."
>
> The *tsuru* is frequently joined in art with the pine tree and the bamboo. The former combination, known as the *Matsu-ni-Tsuru,* signifies extreme longevity or, as some interpret it, joyfulness, for the evergreen pine, expressing unchangeable faithfulness, and the longevity of the crane, symbolize youth and old age, the ideal of happiness to all. The association with the bamboo, *Take-ni-Tsuru,* has a similar signifiance.[2]

The crane is also represented with the tortoise.

KARASU
(Crow)

The black crow is not drawn with the sun as a background merely for striking effect, but on account of an astrological fancy derived from the old Chinese cosmic philosophy of Hwai Nan Tse, which asserts that a three-legged crow lives in the sun. There does not appear to be any Buddhist legend associated with this belief, such as that which connects the hare with the moon.

Shinto tradition tells that when Jimmu Tenno, the first Mikado and ancestor of the royal house, succeeded in driving

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[1] W. F. Mayers, *The Chinese Reader's Manual,* p. 52.
[2] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery,* p. 488.

the enemy from his island home, the heavenly gods sent him not only a sword of divine temper, but also a crow eight feet long to guide his army. The crow has thus become a favored bird in Japan. A flock of them is a prominent feature in the sacred pictures sold at the shrines of Kumano. There is a belief that the Kumano deities employ the crow as their messenger. Koyasan is so precipitous a mountain that such luxuries as bean-curds cannot be carried up to the shrine at the top, so the priest places money on the temple balcony, the crow flies off with it, and brings back bean-curds in exchange!

Another instance of the belief in bird-augury is shown in the saying, when anyone is ill, that if the crow cries, death is near. This feeling is shared by many peoples.

The crow also suggests filial devotion, for it is said that the young birds feed the mother bird.

ONDORI
(Cock)

Cocks are often kept in the temple grounds and carefully tended by the priests. Their regular crowing marks the passage of time, and they are also believed to foretell changes in the weather. To the Chinese the cock's crow suggests *Toten-ko*, signifying "The eastern heavens are reddening." Therefore to them the cock is a herald of morning; but the Japanese hear the words, *Kokka-koo*, which, rendered phonetically, means "Happiness to our land."

Cocks are often depicted standing on the temple drum, which summons the worshipers to prayer. Formerly, the drum — which is recognized as a symbol of good government — was placed outside the temple doors and loudly beaten when anyone came to complain of a wrong. In times of peace few

evil acts were committed, and so the fowls made the drums their resting place.

The cock is an important element in the Shinto sun-myth. When the Sun Goddess retired to her cave in wrath, and left the world in darkness, the "long-singing birds of the eternal lands" were made to crow before the door of the cavern, suggesting to the irate Goddess that day had dawned even without her august presence, and thus inducing her to come forth.

The cock is the tenth sign of the zodiac.

HOTOTOGISU
(Cuckoo)

The note of the cuckoo has, in China and Japan, been poetically associated with the perfume of the orange blossom, bringing to mind thoughts and emotions of the past. It has been thought to resemble the human voice, and is regarded as a note of warning to the traveler, for when its cry, *fujoki*, "It is better to return," is heard, the wayfarer feels that danger may be in store for him should he continue his journey.

The cuckoo is often drawn flying across the crescent moon, recalling the story of Yorimasa, who, with bow and arrow, slew the mysterious monster that had tormented the life of the Mikado Konoye. This was in the year 1153.

The Mikado had been ill all night with terrible nightmares, to the confusion of his numerous doctors; and his many feminine attendants had done all they could to soothe him, to no avail. Every night, at the hour of the bull [2:00 A.M., an hour when evil power is great], the dovecote was fluttered by this fearful visitation. But, at length, either these gentle dames or other watchers noticed that before each access a cloud had drifted over the palace, and that, resting just above the sleeping-apartments, two lights shone out from the dark mass. Then the bells of the

city temples sounded the hour of the bull. The gentlemen of the palace and the imperial guards were set to watch, the priests prayed to ward off the evil influence, but uselessly. Then Yorimasa — a brave warrior, a famous archer, one of the guards — was allowed or ordered to destroy the evil thing, whatever it might be. He, with a follower, watched nightly until the dark cloud and the shining orbs were near, when the great bow of Yorimasa was discharged, and a strange and wonderful beast fell blinded to the ground. The sword of Yorimasa despatched it in nine separate blows, and the thing, said to have been something of the monkey, the tiger, and the serpent, was burned to ashes. For this Yorimasa was given the girl he loved, the Lady Iris-Flower (who therefore had not watched in vain), and with her the celebrated sword called Shishi-no-o (King of the Wild Boars).[1]

The time of the year was the beginning of the fifth month; the crescent moon hung like a silver bow in the twilight sky, and the cuckoo was calling from the trees near-by; so the Minister of the Left, who handed the sword to Yorimasa, improvised the first half of a stanza saying:

> "O cuckoo of wonder, even your name
> Climbs ever upward to the heaven!"

Then Yorimasa, on his knees, with uplifted hands and bowed head, received the sword, and as he did so he completed the short poem with these words:

> "Not through thine own, but through the merit
> of the moon-shaped bow!"

The minister used the cuckoo, then calling in the trees, as simile of the brave warrior whose fame was rising now at court because of his brave deeds, and Yorimasa modestly answered that all was due, not to his skill, but to his bow, which he likened to the crescent moon then reigning in the sky. Both had turned to the scenery of the moment for inspiration — the minister in

[1] John La Farge, *An Artist's Letters from Japan*, p. 131.

expressing his praise and the warrior in receiving it with becoming humility and grace.[1]

UGUISU
(Nightingale)

This loveliest of song birds has been termed the "Japanese nightingale."[2] It appears with the plum blossom as the herald of spring, and together they are one of the oldest poetical associations. They symbolize sweetness and anticipated happiness, and are thus sometimes introduced into the marriage ceremony. Lafcadio Hearn writes:

The *uguisu* is a holy little bird that professed Buddhism. All *uguisu* have professed Buddhism from time immemorial; all *uguisu* preach alike to men the excellence of the divine sutra, *Ho-ke-kyo!* in the Japanese tongue *Ho-ke-kyo,* in the Sanskrit *Saddharma Pundarika,* the divine book of the Nicheren sect. Very brief indeed is my little feathered Buddhist's confession of faith: only the sacred name reiterated over and over again like a litany, with liquid burst of twittering between, *Ho-ke-kyo!* Only this one phrase, but deliciously he utters it! With what slow, amorous ecstasy he dwells upon its golden syllables! It hath been written, "He who shall keep, read, or write this sutra shall obtain eight hundred good qualities of the eye. . . . . *Ho-ke-kyo!*" A single word only. But it is also written: "He who shall joyfully accept a single word from this sutra, incalculably greater shall be his merit than the merit of one who shall supply all beings in the four hundred thousand Asankhyeyas of worlds with all the necessities of happiness." . . . . Always he makes a reverent little pause after uttering it and before shrilling out his ecstatic warble — his bird-hymn of praise. First the warble; then a pause of about five seconds; then a slow, sweet, solemn

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[1] Yei Theodora Ozaki, *Warriors of Old Japan,* p. 34.

[2] *Cettria cantans,* the name of a small singing bird, the Japanese bush-warbler. It is called the Japanese nightingale, but it has a different note from the European variety.

utterance of the holy name in a tone as of meditative wonder; then another pause; then another wild, rich, passionate warble.[1]

AKI NI MUSHI
(Cicada)

To this large class of insects belong the locusts, grasshoppers, and crickets, all of which produce a rhythmical, shrill, or chirping noise by means of membranes stretched as drums beneath the wings.

In Japan, where insect pets are common and insect music enjoyed, these musicians, especially the night singers, are greatly prized. For many years the breeding and sale of musical insects has been a lucrative industry. Exquisite cages of wicker, or sometimes even of gold, are made and the diet of each species is carefully studied and catered to. Of one of the night musicians, Lafcadio Hearn writes:

By day he sleeps or meditates, except while occupied with a slice of egg-plant or cucumber which must be placed in his cage every morning. . . . . But always at sunset the infinitesimal soul of him awakens; then the room begins to fill with a delicate and ghostly music of indescribable sweetness — a thin silvery rippling and trilling as of tiniest electric bells. As the darkness deepens the sound becomes sweeter — sometimes swelling till the whole room seems to vibrate with elfish resonance, sometimes thinning down into the faintest imaginable thread of a voice. . . . . But loud or low, it keeps a penetrating quality that is weird. . . . . All night the atomy sings; he ceases only when the temple bell proclaims the hour of dawn.[2]

This small and various choir has inspired many a beautiful bit of poetry, recalling the Greek love of insect melody.

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 143.

[2] For two delightful essays on the subject of this section, see Lafcadio Hearn, *Shadowings*, and *Exotics and Retrospectives*.

Hear the semi shrill! so from earliest dawning,
All the summer day he cries for the dew of the night.

These trembling dews on the grass, are they tears for the death of the summer
Tears of the insect singers that now so sadly cry?

CHO
(Butterfly)

The old aesthetic feeling about butterflies, which found such delightful expression in Japanese art and song and custom, may have been first developed under Chinese teaching. The weird beliefs of the people are no doubt of Chinese derivation, but these beliefs may be even older than China herself. The most interesting one is that the soul of a living person may wander about in the form of a butterfly. A butterfly may also be the soul of a dead person. Indeed, it is a custom of souls to take butterfly shape in order to announce the fact of their final departure from the body, and for this reason any butterfly that enters a house ought to be kindly treated.[1]

One of the most beautiful legends of Japan is based upon this fancy. Two lovers, on the eve of their union, were separated by death. The soul of the fair maiden passed out in the form of a white butterfly. The lover, thus left to loneliness and sorrow, ended his life by drowning himself in the river. So strong had been the bond between them that his soul also entered a white butterfly, and, to this day, in any lovely garden or open meadow, this pair of lovers may be seen, the maiden ever leading onwards, the lover ever following!

The paper butterflies, *o-chō* and *me-chō*, used during the wedding ceremony, are of entirely different significance. Mitford carefully describes this custom:

During the wedding ceremony the use of wine is important. Two married ladies each take one of the wine bottles which have

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Kwaidan*, p. 184.

been prepared, and place them in the lower part of the room. Then two handmaids, who act as wine pourers, bring the kettles and place them in the lower part of the room. The two wine bottles have respectively a male and female butterfly attached to them. The female butterfly is laid upon its back and the wine is poured from that bottle into the kettle. The male butterfly is then taken out and laid upon the female butterfly, and the wine from that bottle is poured into the same kettle and the whole is transferred with due ceremony to another kettle of different shape, which the wine pourers place in front of themselves. . . . . Later, during the wedding feast, butterflies of gold and silver paper are attached to the wine kettles.[1]

As symbols, these butterflies express "the joy of loving union and the hope that the newly married couple may pass through life together as a pair of butterflies flit lightly through some pleasant garden, now hovering upward, now downward, but never widely separating."[2]

The butterfly may also symbolize womanhood; ornaments in the shape of a butterfly are worn in the hair, and "Cho" is commonly used as a woman's name.

TOMBO
(Dragon-Fly)

Owing to the large amount of stagnant water in the rice-fields, Japan has a great number of dragon-flies. For centuries they have been a favorite subject for poets and artists, and have become an emblem of the empire.

One of the old names of Japan is Akitsu-shima, meaning the "Island of the Dragon-Fly," and written with the character representing the dragon-fly, which insect, now called *tombo,* was anciently called *akitsu.* . . . . There is a tradition that the first emperor, Jimmu, some twenty-six hundred years ago, ascended a mountain to gaze over the province of Yamato, and observed to

[1] A. B. Mitford (Lord Redesdale), *Tales of Old Japan,* p. 367.
[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *Kwaidan,* p. 185.

those who accompanied him that the configuration of the land was like a dragon-fly licking its tail. Because of this august observation the province of Yamato came to be known as the Land of the Dragon-Fly, and, eventually, the name was extended to the whole island.[1]

Some of the names of the different species show the fanciful imaginings of the people. *Shojo-tombo* is bright red, and is named because of its color — the *shojo* (*q.v.*) are mythological creatures with bright red hair. *Yurei-tombo*, or "Ghostly Dragon-fly," is black, and probably suggests the primitive idea of shadow. *Shorai-tombo*, or "Dragon-fly of the Dead," does not refer to the appearance of the insect, but to the weird belief that it is ridden by the dead. During the Festival of Bon, the Buddhist All Souls', *shorai-tombo* are said to carry the spirits of ancestors who then revisit their former homes. At this time children are forbidden to molest them, and there is an old folk-saying that the child who catches dragon-flies never "attains knowledge." The idea that they are used as ghostly steeds is also shown in the belief that certain species carry on their backs the Goddess Kwannon. This is probably due to the markings on the thorax, which slightly resemble a Buddhist image.

Japanese literature is filled with poetic fancies woven about this shadowy insect.

Nagaré-yuku
Awa ni yumé mire
Tombo kana.

(Lo! the dragon-fly dreams a dream above the flowing of the foam bubbles.)

Aki no hi no
Sométa iro nari
Aka-tombo.

(Dyed he is with the color of autumn days, O the red dragon-fly.)

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *A Japanese Miscellany*, p. 82.

Obotsu kana!
Yumé ka? utsusu ka?
Kagero no
Honoméku yori mo
Hakanakarishi wa!

(O my doubt! Is it a dream or a reality? — more fugitive than even the dim flitting of a dragon-fly!)

HOTARU
(Firefly)

The firefly figures conspicuously in both the art and poetry of Japan. These insects are particularly brilliant during the autumn months, and evening picnic parties are given, the principal attraction being an intense enjoyment of the landscape "spangled by ten thousand brilliant spots of golden light." Cages are also made for them, and hung under the eaves of the houses, the tiny prisoner exemplifying the "moth-and-flame" idea by attracting numberless winged visitors.

The story of Princess Hotaru-himé is one of the loveliest of Japanese fairy stories. The Firefly Princess, beset by importunate and undesirable suitors, ordained that she would not marry until a lover brought a flash of fire. In despair the various insects set forth on this impossible quest; one flew to a lamp and burned his wings in the flame; another drowned himself in the oil; some were burned at the fire on the top of an incense stick; others were burned in the shrine-lanterns; the stag-beetle found some bits of glowing wood in a rotten tree stump; and the carrion-beetle crawled to the seashore and found some fish scales that emitted light, but the distance was so great that it was daylight before the flower palace of the lovely princess was reached, and the fire had gone out! At last, the Firefly Prince arrived, carrying his flame on his own body — and quickly won the heart of the weary Hotaru.

Many years have passed since then, but still some firefly maidens must demand that their earth-born lovers shall prove their love by bringing a flash of fire, and for this reason the night insects hover helplessly about the lamps and lanterns in the vain hope of winning some beautiful firefly wife.

In the old days poor students were wont to study by the light from a number of caged fireflies. It has become a common saying that if a student has accomplished a difficult task, "he has finished his study by the fireflies' light."

KUMO
(Spider)

The uncanny notions about spiders are no doubt universal. In Japan, it is believed that after the lights are out and darkness has settled upon the land, they are transformed into little demons, or *oni*, who haunt the precincts of home and temple. The spider is emblematic of craft, more particularly of magical craft.

Part Three

DEITIES

PART III

DEITIES

"Shintoism and Buddhism, with their numerous subdivisions and their innumerable deities, are the two main creeds that hold sway in Japan." Shintoism — with its simple shrines entirely devoid of all decoration and of all images, and having only the mirror, the sword, and the crystal ball, its three special objects of worship, upon its altars — is indigenous to the country, and is considered the national religion. Since 1870, an effort has been made by the government to purge the country of all that pertains to Buddhism, the foreign invader. But from the viewpoint of art, Buddhism, gathering beauty as it has traveled from country to country, and saturated as it is with the stored-up treasures of centuries of the richness and beauty of oriental love of color and form, has in Japan, the scene of its last great stand, done more to make the art of the country what it is than any other factor. However, comparing the influence of Buddhism upon the art of China, Thibet, India, Ceylon, Siam, and other countries, it must be acknowledged that the contact and final fusion with the simplicities and severities of Japanese Shinto has produced a refinement and subtlety of art expression that is surpassed by no other nation in the world.

The term "Buddha" means literally, "one who has attained perfect enlightenment." It is applied not only to Shaka (Gautama), the historical Buddha, but to numberless other abstract deities.

"Bosatsu" is derived from the Sanskrit "Bodhisattva": *bodhi*, "wisdom," and *sattva*, "being," "essence"; in Buddhism, "one of a numerous class of beings who, having arrived at supreme wisdom (*bodhi*), have to pass through human existence only once more before attaining to Buddha-hood, or complete enlightenment, and entrance into Nirvana."

The suffix *-ten* or *-den* is added to the names of many of the Buddhist deities. It is the Chinese *-tien*, and corresponds to the Sanskrit word *Deva*, the general designation of all Brahmanic gods. Literally, it means "spirits of heaven."

SHAKA MUNI
(The Buddha)

To enter upon even a short sketch of the Buddha by proceeding without a glance at the conditions that existed in the land of his birth would result not only in the loss of much of interest but in ignoring the origin of many of the most familiar Buddhistic symbols, for much of the teaching of Buddha, many of his attributes, and some of the most important symbols connected therewith, may be traced to pre-Buddhistic times.

At the time of Gautama's birth, about six hundred years before Christ, the grandeur of the Vedic hymns — "those precious relics of ancient thought" — the intense love and worship of Nature which showed itself in the "simple feeling of awe and wonder at the glorious battles of the storm and the recurring victories of the sun,"[1] had been replaced by a less pure, a less spontaneous ritual, and by a —

growing belief in the efficacy of carefully conducted rites and ceremonies, in charms and incantations, before a growing depend-

[1] T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 23.

THE BUDDHA'S ENTRANCE INTO NIRVANA

ence on dreams and omens and divinations. A belief in the existence of a soul was probably universal, and the doctrine of transmigration satisfied many. The religious use of the Vedas and the right to sacrifice were strictly confined to the Brahmans. Here and there traveling logicians were willing to maintain these against all the world; anchorites had their schemes of universal knowledge and salvation: ascetics, with unwavering faith in self-torture and self-repression, in the hope of becoming more powerful than the gods; and solitary hermits sought for some satisfactory solution of the mystery of life.[1]

It is not difficult to find, in conditions such as these, the source of much that was carried further in to later Buddhistic expression.

Gautama Buddha was born in India; his father was a chief of the Sakya, an Aryan tribe or clan, a cultivator of rice, and a land-owner. He had lived to middle age without heir, when to his wife was born Gautama, the future Buddha.[2] Many are the miraculous stories of the Buddha's birth and infancy. When it came time for him to leave the Tushita heaven and be born on earth as Gautama, the Enlightened One, the Deliverer of Mankind, he entered the womb of his mother, Maya, in the form of a white elephant.[3] On his birth, which was without pain, he was received into the hands of the God Brahma. When he was placed upon the ground, he pointed with one hand toward heaven, and with the other toward earth, and exclaimed: "I am all"; then he advanced seven steps to each of the cardinal points and a lotus flower sprang up at every step. As the lad grew older he developed

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[1] T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 24.

[2] The Japanese name for Gautama Buddha is Shaka Muni; Sanskrit, Siakya Muni.

[3] Sir J. G. Scott (Shway Yoe), *The Burman, His Life and Notions*, 3d ed., pp. 485–489.

the oriental love of contemplation, but stories are also told of his success in archery and the twelve warlike arts. He married early, as was the custom of his people. His mind was, however, already filled with philosophical thoughts and questionings and a longing to retire to a life of solitary meditation. When he had been married a number of years, his son Rahula was born, and the feeling that this strongest of family ties might later become too strong to sever was perhaps the immediate cause of his renunciation of a worldly life. At about this time, moreover, occurred the incident that is termed in Buddhistic writings "the four visions," and which must have had an effect upon his sensitive mind. As he walked one day in his father's gardens accompanied by his charioteer, Channa, there appeared to him in quick succession, first, the form of a tottering old man; then of a sick man; next of a dead body; and, lastly, of an ascetic. His attendant was each time specially inspired to explain these visions to his deeply moved master. That night Gautama left his home accompanied only by his horse and his faithful Channa. He cut off his long hair with a sword, exchanged his clothes with a passing beggar, and gave himself up to the life of an ascetic. After years of self-mortification, struggle, and temptation, when he was almost in despair, he attained Buddha-hood. He was seated one day in the shade of a pipal tree — which from that time has been called the Bodhi tree, the Tree of Wisdom — when supreme enlightenment came to him with the knowledge that peace lay in the "power over the human heart of inward culture and of love for others; and he rested on a certitude that could never be shaken."[1] For the rest of his long life his time was spent in meditation, in preaching, and in gathering disciples

[1] T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 40.

around him, and laying the foundation of his order. When the end was near he lay down, his head toward the north and "his feet crossed as any lion king." His followers, and all the animals, gathered around him, and as he died "the great earth quaked throughout, the sun and moon withdrew their shining, the sturdy forests shook like aspen leaves, whilst flowers and leaves untimely fell around like rain."[1]

The representations of Gautama Buddha are manifold, and differ somewhat in the various Buddhistic countries, but the Japanese artist is the one who has achieved the greatest beauty of outline and proportion, and the utmost beauty of expression. Not until several centuries after his death were there any actual representations of him; his presence was merely indicated by such objects as the tree, the *stupa*, and the wheel. In the earliest portrayals of the first sermon, in Deer Park, the wheel, symbol of his teaching or of his law, is shown between two deer. The oldest single statue of the Buddha dates back to about 142 A.D. Such figures are always draped, usually in a fashion which shows that they were undoubtedly executed under Greek influence. In some of the old Chinese and Thibetan statues the drapery is indicated by wavy lines; this is accounted for by the story that Buddha, in order to lighten the work of the artists, who were blinded by his glory, arranged so that his image was mirrored in the water. The artists reproduced this reflection. Other characteristics generally present in representations of the Buddha are the impassive, tranquil features, typical of complete conquest over the passions and of perfect repose; the circle, lotus, or *manji* (swastika), or other auspicious mark on the palms

[1] Samuel Beal, *Buddhism in China*, p. 99.

of the hands and sometimes on the soles of the feet; the *ûrnâ*,[1] a mark, usually a moonstone or precious gem, in the forehead between the eyes and often in the brow, which is termed the third eye or the eye of transcendental wisdom; the knob or protuberance on the top of the head, typifying supernatural intelligence, which in statues made in Ceylon and Siam is greatly exaggerated; the long pendulous ear-lobes that occasionally hang down to the shoulders, and which no doubt originated in the love of heavy, elaborate jewelry noticeable among the early Orientals;[2] and the short knobby hair, often carved so as to resemble a close-fitting, curly wig. It will be remembered that Gautama signalized his renunciation of the world by cutting off his hair with a sword; the resulting stumps are said to have turned into permanent knobs or short curls.[3] A legend not without interest accounts for the presence of these curls in a different way. When the master sat meditating, in the heat of the mid-day sun, some kindly snails

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[1] "The word *ûrnâ* itself, literally meaning 'wool,' has been a constant puzzle to Sanskrit and Pali scholars. The explanation of it is, I believe, that the Divine Light, by means of which Gautama gained his Buddha-hood, was conceived as converging towards the center of his forehead from 'the innumerable worlds' and entering his brain in flashes, like the lightning in an Indian sky, which is always drawn in Indian pictures in thin, wavy lines, never in the zigzag fashion of the 'forked lightning' usually represented in European art. . . . . Now, a number of such wavy lines, light flashes, or 'hair rays' converging to a single point would strikingly suggest a tuft of wool, each hair of which would symbolize a ray of cosmic light. When Gautama at last attained to perfect enlightenment, or perfect communion with the Divine Consciousness, the cosmic light he had absorbed was conceived as issuing from his brain for the enlightenment of his followers. This mode of suggesting a mystic idea by concrete symbolism is characteristically Eastern." — E. B. Havell, *The Ideals of Indian Art*, pp. 50–51.

[2] It is of interest that as only the wealthiest classes could wear the heaviest and most elaborate earrings, the elongated ear-lobes became associated with wealth and with royalty, and were considered a thing of beauty; they were therefore added to the representations of the gods and, finally, became a symbol of divinity.

[3] M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 474.

THE CHILD BUDDHA

clustered upon his head and protected him from the blinding rays!

The statues of the Buddha may be classed under three heads: seated, standing, and recumbent. Further variations are introduced by the *mudrâs*,[1] or significant positions of the hands. The meditative attitude represents him seated with legs folded under the body in the Indian fashion, and with hands supinated, one over the other, or with the knuckles and thumb points of each hand touching; the witness attitude is also seated with legs crossed, and with the right hand pointing to earth and the left resting on the left foot; the argumentative or teaching attitude represents him with the thumb and fingers of the right hand touching the fingers of the left, apparently enumerating the various heads of his doctrine and enforcing them, as he did, by reiteration; in the preaching attitude he usually stands erect with one finger of the right hand raised in the didactic manner that Buddhist priests adopt when reading the law. The attitude of benediction can hardly be distinguished from the preaching attitude, for the right hand is raised as if in blessing; the right hand clasping the index-finger of the left hand is the position of the Buddha, "supreme and eternal."

Certain scenes from Gautama's life are frequently chosen for representation. His birth, called in Japan, Tanjo-no-Shaka, is depicted by a child standing on a lotus, the right hand pointing to heaven, the left to earth, signifying his dominion over all. His return from the mountains, Shussan-no-Shaka, shows an emaciated figure, head partly shaven, and a slight beard on the face, his dress blown about by the wind.

[1] *Mudra*, a system of magic gesticulations consisting in distorting the fingers so as to imitate ancient Sanskrit characters of supposed magic efficiency.

Nehan-no-Shaka is the entrance of the Buddha into Nirvana; he lies with closed eyes upon a raised platform, his head resting on a lotus. Shagoku-no-Shaka, as the omniscient and all-wise, is a representation showing him seated upon a lotus in the teaching attitude — of this it has been written:

> It is true that the conception of the seated Buddha is one into which the genius of the greatest artists may be poured without any lack of room for its complete expansion; it is also true that this motif, even in a shapeless or grotesque form, remains for those whose spiritual heritage it is, a well-understood symbol of eternal things.[1]

The most usual form in which Shaka is found in Japan is that of Amida; the Japanese Buddhists consider Shaka as an incarnation of Amida, as a tangible human form of an abstract divinity. Shaka *is* Amida, as Jesus Christ is God. The great Diabutsu at Kamakura, and most of the familiar statues either seated or standing, represent Amida.

The Buddhist trinity is occasionally represented. The later representations of it show Amida seated between Monju, on his right hand, personifying divine wisdom, and Fugen, who replaces Avalokitesvara (Kwannon) in the earlier groups, on his left, personifying divine love. The earliest idea of a Buddhist triad was probably derived from the Brahmanical triad, but was, in reality, merely three manifestations of one personality. Later it expressed: the Buddha; his Law or Teaching; and his Monastic Order or Body of Followers. According to some sects, the Buddhist trinity represents the Buddhas of the Past, Present, and Future — Avalokitesvara (Kwannon), Gautama, and Maitreya.

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[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, "The Relations of Art and Religion in India," *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, II, p. 73.

From a print by Hiroshige

DAIBUTSU (AMIDA) KAMAKURA

The birthday of Shaka, Bussho-e, the eighth of April, and the day commemorating his death, the fifteenth of February, are both important feast-days in Japan. On the former, the ceremony called the washing of the statue of Buddha is quite commonly celebrated. It consists of placing an image of the child Buddha, Tanjo-no-Shaka, in a tub-shaped vessel and pouring over it, with a wooden ladle, a kind of sweet tea, called *ama-cha.* Back of this Buddhist ceremony lies, undoubtedly, the older Japanese celebration, shared by all early peoples, of spring and the rebirth of the year, when water or some other liquid was poured upon persons or objects in the belief that the life-giving fluid would insure growth.

AMIDA

(Personification of Boundless Light)

The most familiar form of the Buddha in Japan is called Amida. He is an abstract conception of Deity, an ideal of omnipotent being and of boundless light — which is the meaning of his name. In his likeness, Shaka (Gautama Buddha)[1] appeared on earth. Kwannon is regarded as the spiritual son or emanation of Amida. The repetition of the name of Amida is so meritorious that the sacred formula, *Namu Amida Butsu,* shortened to *Amida Buddh,* is constantly heard in Buddhistic temples.

DAI NICHI NYORAI[2]

(The Great Illuminator)

Like Amida, Dai Nichi Nyorai is a form of the Buddha,

[1] In Buddhism, as in other religious systems, contradictions and anachronisms occasionally occur. Gautama Buddha was born before the idea of Amida was realized. Amida is the abstract conception of deity, and Gautama Buddha the tangible human expression.

[2] Nyorai is the Japano-Chinese equivalent of the Sanskrit word *Tathāgata,* the "Perfect One." It also means "one who has come in like manner," that is, as "previous Buddhas."

and is an extremely abstract divinity. By some sects he is considered a member of the Buddhist trinity. He is one of the numerous personifications of wisdom, especially of the supreme intellect of the Buddhas. He is the Sanskrit Vairocana, and the spiritual father of Fugen. As the Dai Nichi of the spiritual world he is usually represented seated, with the left hand folded upon the index finger of the right. As the Dai Nichi of the material world he is seated in a meditative attitude, and wears a tiara upon his head.

KWANNON
(Goddess of Mercy)

High up on the back of a camel, amid the dust of the Arabian desert and the shouts of the camel-drivers and the noise and confusion of a merchant's caravan, centuries before the Buddha was born, was always carried a crude image of "the god who hearkens." This image was the prototype of Kwannon. It was brought from the coast of Arabia by sailors and merchants to Ceylon, continued its journey through many lands, was worshiped by many peoples, gathering different characteristics and attributes as it traveled through India, China, Thibet, and Korea, until it reached Japan in the fulness of its beauty as the goddess of mercy.

Avalokitesvara, the Indian name for Kwannon, the "looking-down god," was probably derived from the old worship of the hill gods, and can be identified with the Arabic divinity of mercy, Al-Makah, "the god who hearkens," or "who looks down upon men and hears their cry." This is the meaning of the Chinese Kwanyin and the Japanese Kwannon.

Kwannon has been worshiped both as a feminine and as a masculine divinity, but in China and Japan the female form is the one most generally accepted. She is one of the impor-

tant Bosatsu, and is represented in many different ways and has as many different titles; but she is always the goddess of infinite compassion who manifests herself in every one of the innumerable worlds, even unto hell, resolving never to attain Buddha-hood until all beings are not only delivered from punishment, but have also entered Nirvana.

Ju-ichi-men Kwannon, with eleven small faces of the goddess herself arranged in a pyramid upon her head, and Senju-Kwannon, with a thousand arms, of which only forty are represented, are both derived from attempts of the early artists of India to depict literally some of the old legends or some of the Buddhistic texts.

The eleven-faced Kwannon is a depiction or translation of one of her names, Samanta-mukha, "the all-looking," or the "god who looks every way," or it may recall a vow of the Merciful One — "May my head be split asunder if I fail in my efforts to save human souls!" — and legend states that she did give way to discouragement on seeing the inefficacy of her efforts, and that her head split into many pieces, and that Amitabha (Amida) put it together again. There are several versions of this story.

The thousand hands of Kwannon typify the active energies of the goddess — "the all powerful" — and suggest her desire to reach out to all peoples. In each hand is placed a Buddhistic emblem, such as the wheel, the rosary, the lotus flower, the incense burner, the fan, the bow and arrow, the goad or spear, the rope, the axe, the fly brush, the scroll of Buddhistic texts, the begging-bowl, the cup of the sacrifice, the hare and the moon, the cock and the sun, the medicine bottle, the vase for shrine use, various musical instruments, the Brahmanic representation of a burnt food-offering, a branch of willow, the crystal ball, the sacred fungus, and, in the topmost pair of

hands, a small image of the Buddha. Sometimes an image of Kwannon herself, in one of her many manifestations (usually the Gacho Kwannon), is held in one of the hands.[1]

In Kyōto is the famous temple San-jū-san-gen-dō, the temple of the thirty-three thousand images of Kwannon. It was founded in 1132, but was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt in 1266. In it were placed one thousand images of the thousand-handed Kwannon — the number thirty-three thousand being obtained by counting the small images of the goddess in the foreheads, in the halos, and in the hands of the larger statues. The statues are gilded; they are five feet high, arranged tier above tier and producing the effect of a weird and mysterious company. In the center of the temple is a large seated figure of Kwannon surrounded by her twenty-eight followers.

The Batō Kwannon, or the Horse-headed Kwannon, is not,

[1] An interpretative list of these attributes is given by F. G. C. in the *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin*, VIII (1910), 45. In describing a twelfth-century painting of a "Thousand-Armed Kwannon," the author says: "In the center of the forehead and upon the palms of every hand are all-seeing eyes. Before the 'Merciful One's' breast are hands clasped in prayer for the salvation of all creatures; other hands make offering of red and blue lotus to the Blessed Ones; others uphold the Halbert of Sovereignty and Pilgrim's Staff; the Sun and Moon; the Mansions of the Blest and cloud-shaped Blossom of Immortality; twin lotus buds, rising immaculate from Earth's corruption; the Buddhas of the Past and of the Future; the dread mace of Yama, King of Death, and Sword which cleaves through Sin; the Vajra, or thunderbolt of Omnipotence and ever-turning Wheel of Law; the Mirror of self-realization and Tablets of eternal wisdom; the Alms Bowl of the 'Holy One' and Sounding Conch of Victory; the Shield which evil dare not face and Battle-Axe of Strength; the flaming Jewels of Life and Fruitfulness; the yak-tail Scourge which drives all sin away, and Ankus (elephant goad), which compels the wayward one back to the narrow path; Ambrosial Fruit and Nectar-yielding Blossoms; the Crystal Waters which cleanse from filth and purify the anointed; the Holy Sutras and Mystic Bond omnipotent over evil; the Matchless Bow and never-erring Arrow; the Vajra Bell which peals through all the worlds and Triple Vajra potent over body, mind, and soul; the Rope that binds desire and the Rosary; Hands calling all to share eternal bliss."

THREE FORMS OF KWANNON

as the name seems to imply, a woman's body with a horse's head. On the contrary, the head of the horse is merely sculptured upon the tiara worn by the divinity, who is represented with three faces, each face having three eyes, and with four pairs of arms, each bearing a Buddhistic object. According to Lafcadio Hearn —

> the symbolism of the horse's head is fully explained by a large wooden sotoba placed near the shrine bearing, among other inscriptions, the words *Batō Kwan-ze-on Bosatsu, giu ba bodai han ye.* For Batō Kwannon protects the horses and the cattle of the peasant; and he prays not only that his dumb servants may be preserved from sickness, but also that their spirits may enter, after death, into a happier state of existence.[1]

This simple and obviously satisfactory explanation, however, is probably but superficial, and the connection of the horse with Kwannon is from a much older period. In Beal's translation of the travels of Hiuen Tsiang,[2] the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who visited India in the seventh century, is a legend in which a divine horse comes down to the seashore and carries safely across the waters those who pray to him. In explanation of this strange belief a note is added: "Avalokitesvara (Kwannon) is often spoken of as a white horse, *i.e.*, as one who came across the sea."[3]

The simpler portrayals of Kwannon are more lovely, and more truly depict her as the goddess of mercy. Gyoran

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* p. 124.

[2] Samuel Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World,* Vol. II, p. 242.

[3] In the early mythologies of the Mediterranean country there is a mysterious connection between the sea and the horse. In Greece the origin of the horse is ascribed to Poseidon, the God of the Sea; in Arcadia, Poseidon was worshiped under the title of Hippios (from the Greek word "horse"), and the winged horse Pegasus was an offspring of the Ruler of the Deep.

Kwannon is represented with a carp; Anoku Kwannon is seated upon a rock near a waterfall; Nyo-i-rin Kwannon, the Omnipotent, is a seated figure, "with one knee raised and cheek pillowed upon the left hand — the placid and pathetic symbol of perpetual rest";[1] Sho Kwannon, the Kwannon of Divine Wisdom, stands or sits in quiet dignity upon a lotus flower; she bears the mark of the Bosatsu on her brow, and her face expresses peace and compassion. She is sometimes dressed in Indian fashion and carries as her only attribute a single lotus blossom; but often her more elaborate garments are replaced by simple flowing robes, her tiara by a graceful head-drape, and in her hand she carries, instead of the lotus, a roll of Buddhistic scriptures.[2]

The two figures often represented on either side of Kwannon are Fudō and Aizen-myō-ō. The twenty-eight followers of Kwannon are personifications of the twenty-eight constellations known to oriental astronomers. They are often depicted.

MIROKU: MAITREYA
(The Messiah)

Miroku, "the loving and compassionate," as the Sanskrit name Maitreya implies, is termed the Buddhist Messiah, or the Buddha to come. It is believed that five thousand years after Gautama Buddha's entry into Nirvana, Miroku will appear upon earth. His present dwelling is the "Tushita Heaven," "the heaven of the contented ones," a sacred region which is the home of the Bodhisats (Bosatsu), those beings who are destined to become Buddhas; Gautama Buddha once dwelt there, and Miroku now presides over it. While he is

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 69.

[2] The *Butsu-zo-dzu* gives thirty-three different representations of Kwannon.

JIZO

THE CHILDREN'S GOD

awaiting the time for his appearance upon earth he watches over the devout of the Buddhistic faith.

Miroku is often represented with both hands raised, his fingers forming the lotus-shaped *mudra*, that is, the tips of the index-fingers touching and the knuckles of the remaining fingers pressed together. The old images of him were said to emit a bright light; it is probable that they were gilded, but those of the present day are either yellow or pure white.

In Hiuen Tsiang's travels we read: "No words can describe the personal beauty of Miroku. He declares a law not different from ours. His exquisite voice is soft and pure. Those who hear it can never tire; those who listen are never satiated." [1]

The prayers to him are not addressed as to a far-away deity, but to one loving and compassionate, whose heaven is believed to be a region of perfect love and contentment.

JIZO
(Guardian of Children)

Jizo, the gentle, the compassionate, though identified with the Sanskrit god K'shi tegarbha, is the most "Japanese of all Japanese divinities," and is more frequently seen than any other object of worship in Japan.

More sweet assuredly than any imaged Christ, this dream in white stone of the play-fellow of dead children, like a beautiful young boy, with gracious eyelids half-closed and face made heavenly by such a smile as only Buddhist art could have imagined, the smile of infinite lovingness and supreme gentleness. Indeed so charming the ideal of Jizo is, that in the speech of the people, a beautiful face is always likened to his: *Jizo-kao,* "as the face of Jizo." [2]

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[1] A Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who traveled in India, 629–645 A.D.
[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* p. 48.

He is represented standing, though he is sometimes seated; he has the long ear-lobes indicative of divinity; his head is shaven, which at once distinguishes him from either Shaka or Amida, who have short knobby curls. The sleeves of his robe are of extra length, so that they may be a hiding-place for frightened children. He usually carries in one hand the *shakujo*, the ringed staff, and a *tama* in the other.

The image of this god of the children is often necklaced with babies' bibs, and—

little piles of stone are placed upon his pedestal. It is said that these little towers of stones are built by child ghosts for penance in the Sai-no-Kwara, which is the place to which all children after death must go. And the *oni* (demons) come to throw down the stone piles and to frighten and torment the children. But the little souls run to Jizo, who hides them in his great sleeves and comforts them. And every stone one lays upon the knees or at the feet of Jizo with a prayer from the heart helps some child soul to perform his long penance. . . . . The real origin of this custom of piling up stones before the images of Jizo is not known to the people. The custom is founded upon a passage in the famous sutra, "The Lotus of the Good Law": "Even the little boys and girls who in playing erected here and there heaps of sand with the intention of dedicating them as *stupas* [dedicatory mounds or monuments] to the Buddhas, they have all of them reached enlightenment. . . . . The stones heaped about the statue are put there by the people for the sake of the little ones, most often by mothers of dead children.[1]

There are few roadsides in Japan that have not a shrine to Jizo, for he is also the patron of travelers and pilgrims.

There are many popular forms of this "alleviator of all suffering." One of the best beloved is Koyasu-Jizo, to whom women about to become mothers devoutly pray.

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 44.

In the cemeteries of Japan is frequently seen Roku-Jizo, the Six Jizo,[1] a familiar group of this divinity. The faces of each of the six are the same, but each figure differs from the other by the attitude and emblematic attribute. The first holds a Buddhist incense-box; the second, a lotus; the third, a pilgrim's staff; the fourth, the Buddhist rosary; the fifth stands in the attitude of prayer with hands joined; the sixth bears in one hand the *shakujo*, the mendicant priest's staff having six rings attached to the top of it, and in the other the mystic jewel by virtue of which all desires may be accomplished. This last is the most familiar representation of Jizo, the Beloved. The Six Jizo are explained by the following legend: "Jizo was a woman ten thousand *ko* (*kalpas*, a period elapsing from the moment when a universe is formed to the moment when another is put in its place) before this era, and became filled with desire to convert all living beings of the Six Worlds and the Four Births. And by virtue of the Supernatural Powers she multiplied herself and simultaneously appeared in all the Six States of Sentient Existence at once, and converted the dwellers thereof."[2]

MONJU: MANJU-SRI
(God of Wisdom)

In the third century after Christ, when Fa-hien, a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, traveled in India and Ceylon, the worship of two important Bosatsu (Bodhisatvas), Avalokitesvara (Kwannon) and Manju-srī, had become general, although

[1] M. W. de Visser, "The Bodhisattva Ti-Tsang (Jizō) in China and Japan," *Ostasiatische Zeitung,* July–September, 1913, p. 198: "The cult of the Six Jizō is, in Petrucci's opinion, founded in Turkestan."

[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* p. 128, footnote.

they were both undoubtedly included in the Buddhist pantheon of a much earlier date. They were also members of one of the earliest Buddhist triads.

Monju is especially worshiped by the northern Buddhists, and is frequently portrayed in Japan. He is the personification or deification of wisdom, especially of transcendental wisdom or of a "mystic religious insight," and symbolizes the power of scripture, of inspiration, and of divine interpretation. He is the mythical author of the *Saddharma pundarika*, the "Lotus of the Good Law," a chapter of which contains a glorification of the power and glory of Avalokitesvara.

Though he is probably a purely metaphysical creation, he is sometimes associated with Manju-srī, an Indian mendicant who lived about two hundred and fifty years after the Gautama Buddha had entered Nirvana, and who is said to have introduced Buddhism into Nepal. The name Manju-srī means "having a glory or brilliance"—*manju*, meaning "charming," "lovely," and *sri*, a root often seen in the names of gods and men, meaning "glory."

Monju is represented either alone or seated upon the left of the Buddha. He is usually represented upon a roaring lion, which typifies the powerfully penetrating voice of the law. He holds in his right hand the sword of knowledge, the shining blade which "cleaves the clouds of mental darkness" or "dissipates the darkness of ignorance." In his left hand he holds a book in the usual form of the old Indian palm-leaf manuscript, tied around with a string. This book of sacred wisdom is sometimes resting upon a lotus flower, thus symbolizing its supernatural origin. In the later Japanese representation of Monju the book is often replaced by a *tama*, the gem of divine wisdom.

Monju is the special patron of astrologers.

MONJU

FUGEN

FUGEN: SAMANTA-BHADRA
(Love and Wisdom)

Fugen is one of the important Bosatsu (Bodhisat). In the later Buddhistic groups of three deities he is often represented seated upon an elephant on the right side of Shaka (Gautama Buddha), Monju, the god of transcendental wisdom, upon his lion, being on the left of the Master — love as particularity on the elephant, and wisdom as universality on the lion. He also "symbolizes the power of church organization, of ritual, of the communion of saints." [1]

In Buddhist tradition Fugen is the spiritual son of the celestial Buddha, Dai Nichi Nyorai (Vairocano). He is "the all-good," and is the divine patron of those who practice *Hokke zammai*, an intense kind of ecstatic meditation.

KISHI-BOJIN
(Protector of Children)

For sin committed in some previous existence, Kishi-bojin, the Indian woman Haritî or Aritî, was born a demon who devoured her own children. She gave birth to five hundred sons and daughters, one of which she was bound to destroy each day. This legend of horror changes, however, for the demon became converted into a nun by the Buddha, and a divine nature fell upon her. So strange is the turn of popular belief, that she is now considered the special protector of children, and her shrines are often heaped with tiny kimonos and infants' treasures — the votive offerings of sorrowing or grateful mothers.

Kishi-bojin is represented as a beautiful woman, but her weird eyes yet tell something of past horrors. She carries a

[1] Ernest Francisco Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, I, p. 137.

child against her bosom, and holds a pomegranate in one hand. The pomegranate has become her crest, and with it are marked the lanterns and other ornaments of the temples dedicated to her. The pomegranate is believed to have the taste of human flesh, and it is said that with it the Buddha cured her unnatural desire.

IDA-TEN
(The Guardian)

Ida-ten, a guardian god of Buddhism, and referred to as a "swift runner," is shown in martial dress, but must not be confounded with Bishamon-ten.

He carries a halberd and his hands are apposed; the loose part of his garments are kept in place by his feet as a symbol of the subdued elements, and he is also depicted with both hands resting on the pommel of the sword. Like Bishamon, he is often shown pursuing an *oni,* or demon, but the latter carries the sacred gem.[1]

Ida-ten especially keeps guard over the doors of convents and refectories, preventing the entrance of dissensions and distractions; he presides over the prayers that are said before the repasts of the monks, and brings peace and calm to the faithful.

MARISHI-TEN
(Goddess of Light)

Marishi-ten is one of the most important of the Bosatsu. She is distinctly an Indian divinity.

According to Waddell, Marishi, "the resplendent," was originally an Ushas, or goddess of the dawn — a Vedic conception — a metamorphosis of the Sun, coupled with the myth of the

[1] Henri L. Joly, *Legend in Japanese Art,* p. 132.

primeval productive Pig.[1] She is described as the offspring of Brahma, and parent of Sūrya, the Sun. She is also the "Adamantine Sow," Vajra Varāhi. But Marishi is also the chief of the Maruts — the storm gods, the sons of Rudra, who is Siva — armed with lightnings and thunderbolts, "riding on the whirlwind, and directing the storm."[2]

Among the Chinese and Japanese Buddhists she is the personification, or goddess, of light, who holds aloft the sun and moon and is revered as the Queen of Heaven[3] and the mother of the constellation of the Dipper.

She is represented in various ways: sometimes with three faces, the middle and right of which are of gentle expression, and the left fierce and menacing. She usually has six arms holding Buddhist emblems, among which are always the sun and moon. Occasionally, she is drawn standing upon a wild boar.

Marishi-ten has the mysterious power of making herself invisible, so that even the sun and moon cannot see her, and neither fire nor water can destroy her. This characteristic is of great importance on the battle field, and the deity is therefore worshiped by warriors.

YAKUSHI
(God of Medicine)

Yakushi, the Buddha of healing, is usually represented standing upon a lotus in an attitude of contemplation, the folded hands resting upon a medicine flask. He is commonly dressed in Hindu costume, which testifies to his Indian origin.

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[1] "The pig of Vishnu," who rooted up the land from the bottom of the sea.

[2] James Troup, "Some Illustrations of Buddhism from Japanese Pictures," *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society*, VIII (1907–1909), p. 224.

[3] Georgi (an eighteenth-century Jesuit priest), who calls her Mhalhi-ni, explains the name as "a Chinese transcription of the name of the holy Virgin Mary."

FUDO
(The Overcomer)

Fudō is the Sanskrit Achala, the "immovable," or the Buddha incarnated as "the unmoved or immutable one." He is represented as of gigantic size, with fierce expression. He "stands upon an adamantine rock of self-realization," and is surrounded with flames. It is a common error to consider him as the god of fire; the flames are rather symbolic of the power of intellect, or they may suggest the annihilation by fire of man's guilt and passion. He holds in one hand a rope or cord with which to bind transgressors, or, according to another interpretation, which he uses to bind human passions and desires. In the other hand he holds a sword that smites evil-doers or "cuts through the darkness of ignorance." He sometimes has a wheel which may be called his crest, and his temples are decorated with this symbol. Fudō is usually attended by his two chief followers, Seitaka Dōji and Kongara Dōji.

AIZEN-MYO-O
(A God of Love)

Aizen-myō-ō (Sanskrit Rāga, "the great passion") is a transformation of Achala, the indomitable. He is popularly considered as the god of love. He "symbolizes the passions which, left to themselves, are sources of vice, but which, when controlled, are sources of the power to strike for definite aims."[1] He is represented with fierce expression, three eyes, sometimes three heads, and six arms. He is sometimes placed with Fudō as an attendant of Kwannon.

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[1] M. Anesaki, *Buddhist Art in Its Relation to Buddhist Ideals*, description of Plate XVIII.

OJIN TENNO
(God of War)

Ojin Tenno was the son of the Empress Jinjo. Her conquest of Korea is believed to have been due to the divine spirit which was bestowed on her then unborn son. His birth occurred during the Korean war, and he afterwards became a great warrior, which probably accounts for the popular estimate of him as the god of war.

The Buddhists canonized him as Hachiman Dai Bosatsu, or the "Incarnation of Buddha of the Eight Banners." Hence among the devotees of the India faith, this god of war and patron of warriors is called Hachiman, and by those of the native cult, Ojin Tenno. Hachiman (*hachi*, "eight"; *man*, "banners") is the Chinese form of Yawate (*ya*, "eight"; *wata*, "banner").

Ojin Tenno is often depicted as an infant in the arms of his illustrious mother, who stands in a boat while a messenger of the Dragon King offers him the jewels of the ebbing and flowing tides. He is usually represented, however, as a fiercely scowling man, grasping a two-edged sword. The dove, for some curious reason, is his messenger.

He was the special patron of the powerful Minamoto family, who erected many shrines in his honor.

EMMA-O
(King of the Dead)

Emma-ō, though similar in appellation and vocation to the Sanskrit Yama Rāja, judge of the dead and master of hell, is in Japanese Buddhism a very different conception from the Indian form. He is a —

terrible figure, all vermilion red, towering above many smaller images — a goblin shape with immense cavernous eyes. His

mouth is widely opened as if speaking in wrath, and his brows frown terribly. A long red beard descends upon his red breast, and on his head is a strangely shaped crown of black and gold, having three singular lobes, the left lobe bearing an image of the moon, the right, an image of the sun; the central lobe is all black. But below it, upon the deep gold-rimmed black band, flames the mystic character signifying "king." Also, from the same crown-band protrude at descending angles to left and right two gilded scepter-shaped objects. In one hand the king holds an object similar of form, but larger, his *shaku* or regal wand. This is Emma-ō, lord of shadows, judge of souls, king of the dead. The Japanese are wont to say of any man having a terrible countenance, "His face is the face of Emma-ō." [1]

FUTEN
(God of the Winds)

Futen belongs to the class of lesser Buddhist divinities to which the common people constantly appeal. He is believed to be the master of the winds, and is depicted as resembling an *oni* (*q.v.*). His garments are of leopard's skin, and over his shoulder he carries an enormous bag containing the "gales of winter and the summer zephyrs" — these he produces at will by simply opening his bag.

The older representations of Futen show him as an old man with flowing beard, carrying a banner which is blown about by the wind. He is one of the Juni-ten (twelve gods), and is thus represented when shown in this capacity.

RAIDEN
(God of Thunder)

Like Futen, god of the winds, Raiden is also one of the lesser divinities. He has in his charge the thunder, which has ever filled the superstitious mind with awe and terror. He is

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 50.

depicted as a dwarf-like creature, short and squat, with two goatlike horns protruding from his forehead, suggesting in his grotesque appearance an *oni*, or demon. He is surrounded by a semicircle of eight drums, and by striking these he produces thunder.

NI-O
(Two Kings)

In Japan, the two great Brahmanic gods, Brahma and Indra, have not only been claimed by Buddhism, but have been assigned an inferior position in the Buddhist pantheon. They have become keepers of the temple gates, and are not only subordinate to all the Buddhas and Bosatsu (Bodhisatvas), but to every saint who has attained to the grade of Rakan (Arhat), and Indra may "now wield his thunderbolt only in defense of the faith that dethroned him."

These temple guardians are monstrous figures of colossal size, "fearfully muscled," with expressions of savage menace. They are draped only with a loin cloth and a scarf flowing loosely from the shoulders. They are placed on either side of the temple entrance: the one on the right is Indra and is of a dull blood red, "with opened mouth representing the Yo, or male principle; and the one on the left is Brahma, green, with compressed lips, representing the In, or female principle."[1] According to another interpretation, one with "lips parted in fierce command, and the other with lips compressed in unrelenting resolve."[2]

Prayers are addressed to the Ni-ō, especially by pilgrims. Most of the statues are disfigured by little pellets of white paper, which people chew into a pulp and then spit at them. There is a curious superstition that if the pellets stick to the

[1] Marcus Bourne Huish, *Japan and Its Art*, p. 47.
[2] William Anderson, *The Pictorial Arts of Japan*, note to Plate I.

statue the prayer is heard; if, on the other hand, they fall to the ground, the prayer will not be answered.[1]

Magnificent Ni-ō are to be seen in some of the great temple gateways in Tokyo, Kyōto, and elsewhere. The grandest of all are those in the Ni-ō Mon, or Two King's Gate, of the huge Todaiji temple at Nara, these figures being eight hundred years old. It is impossible not to admire the conception of stormy dignity and hurricane force embodied in those colossal figures.

SHI TENNO
(Deva Kings)

The Shi Tenno, or Four Heavenly Kings, are the guardians of the four quarters of the universe. They are placed, not like the Ni-ō at the outer gate, but at the inner gate of the temple. Their images differ from the Ni-ō in having weapons in their hands, and they are sometimes shown trampling demons under foot.

At the northern quarter Bishamon or Ta-mon-ten, the Brahmanic Kuvera, the blue-faced god, reigns supreme. Komoku, with red face and large eyes, holds sway over the western region; he is sometimes shown with book and brush, besides his spear. At the south, Zocho, white of face and represented as a warrior with spear and armor, presides. Jikoku, with green face and dressed in armor and helmet, carrying a sword or *goko*, guards the eastern portion.

JUNI-TEN
(Twelve Kings)

The Twelve Gods, or Twelve Deva Kings, are Buddhistic adaptations of Brahmanic divinities who control the whole universe.

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 25.

Gwa-ten, the Goddess of the Moon, usually stands upon a lotus and holds aloft a disc emblematic of the moon; sometimes the moon hare is drawn upon the disc or upon her garments.

Nit-ten, the Goddess of the Sun, also holds a disc, symbolizing the sun; she occasionally has a three-legged crow drawn upon it.

Taishaku-ten (Indra) is the ruler of the Devas and is one of the temple guardians. Emma-ō is king of hell and judge of the dead.

The other eight are the gods who govern the elements and the points of the compass. The Shi Tenno, or Four Kings of Heaven, of which Bishamon is the most important, are included in the list of eight.

When the Juni-ten are worshiped, Fudō, though not one of the twelve, is placed in the center, and twelve lights are arranged about him, each representing one of the Juni-ten; prayers asking for the protection of this world and for a good harvest of all grains and for peace and prosperity are addressed to these twelve gods of the universe.

SHICHI FUKUJIN

(The Seven Household Gods)

The Seven Household Gods are perhaps more correctly classed among patron saints than among deities seriously worshiped, but the little group has become a sort of popular appendage to Japanese Buddhism, and representations of either one or several of the gods are found even in the humblest home.

There is no clue to either the authorship or period of the heterogeneous association, but it has no claim to great antiquity,

notwithstanding the more or less remote origin of the individual members.[1]

The oldest picture in which the entire seven are shown dates to about 1700 A.D.

They are nominally a Buddhist assemblage, but three are derived, through Buddhism, from Brahmanic sources; three are distinctly Chinese; and one only is of native origin. The number seven, always an auspicious number in oriental symbolism, may depend on a phrase in Buddhist scripture which states that if certain commands are understood and obeyed, seven calamities will instantly disappear, and seven fortunes will immediately appear; the seven gods may be said each to personify a type of good fortune.

Most foreign (European and American) writers charge these seven deities with special functions, thus: Fuku-roku-ju, the tall-headed sage, is called the god of longevity or of wisdom; Daikoku, with mallet and rice bales, presides over worldly prosperity; Ebisu, the fisherman, is considered to provide for the daily sustenance of the workingman; Hotei, the Friar Tuck, is the type of contentment; Bishamon, the warrior, is of course the god of martial prowess; Benten, the one lady of the party, governs matrimonial affections; while the grave Ju-ro-jin lends aid to the aspirants after scholastic renown. This convenient and satisfactory arrangement does not seem to have entered the thoughts of those who grouped the divine beings together. In point of fact the average Japanese would be rather perplexed by an inquiry as to the precise use he would make of any of the household gods, for his mental impressions upon the subject are almost wholly derived from vague tradition and pictorial representation, and even should an attempt be made to secure a more scientific footing, the learned but rather arid discourses in native literature assign such multifarious powers to some of the members and so care-

[1] William Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of a Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, pp. 26–40.

JU-RO-JIN
DAIKOKU

BENTEN

HOTEI

BISHAMON

FUKU-ROKU-JU
EBISU

SEVEN HOUSEHOLD GODS

fully avoid attributing anything at all to others, that the foreign investigator finds himself rewarded for his pains by little more than a collapse of his former plausible inferences. . . . . Although not one out of a thousand of the people can impart anything on the subject that would be of use to the student of comparative religions, many a child in Japan has been rocked to his earliest infant sleep by the soothing sounds of:

San-do, man-do, o funé wa gichirako
Ebis Sama, Daikoku Sama
Fuku no kami yo!
Gichi, gichi kogeba,

which announces the rowing into port of the Treasure Boat, with the seven gods, on New Year's Eve, and his parents invoke them while exorcising all evil demons, and a household is scarcely complete without a picture or image of one or more of the favorite gods. In fact, Ebisu and Daikoku are found on the god-shelf of all kitchens.[1]

DAIKOKU-TEN
(God of Wealth)

In tracing the origin of Daikoku to his prototype in India, Mahakala, the black-faced guardian of monasteries and religious communities, many interesting aspects of the subject are presented.

In the large Buddhist monasteries of India, a wooden image of the god is placed in the refectories or near the door of the butteries. The brethren devoutly burn incense and, at meal times, set before it portions of food. They also anoint the image with oil, so that it soon becomes dark in color. From this custom is derived his Indian name, which means the "Black One," the Japanese name, Daikoku, being but a translation.

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[1] William Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of a Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum.*

On the first days of every cycle one thousand black beans are offered to him; this is termed the Mystery of Mysteries. The beans are used like the beads of a rosary — a prayer or word of praise being said for each bean.

Priests look to him for help, and pray to him that their offerings may not fail. Soldiers invoke his aid for success in war. This may be because of his resemblance to Marishi, and he is sometimes shown with Marishi and Bishamon as the Three Gods of War.

In Japan, Daikoku retains some of his Indian characteristics, but he has become a highly popularized form of the Temple Guardian, and, besides being revered as the god of wealth and prosperity, he is one of the best beloved of the household gods.

Modern representations of him are very similar to the early portrayals. He is short and square in figure, with or without a beard, and has long-lobed ears indicating his divine nature. His face is sometimes blackened in deference to the Buddhist tradition. He wears a long, loose coat, girded at the waist, a pair of Phrygian high boots, and a low round cap, the crown of which projects over his forehead. He is usually standing, but sometimes seated on two rice bales, which are indicative of the wealth of the country, or perhaps refer to the old Buddhist text that describes Daikoku as the god of the five cereals.[1]

Rats are often seen gnawing at the rice bales, and have become a familiar attendant of the god. Some writers suggest that the rodents are introduced with the rice to indicate that all wealth must be well guarded, or that

[1] In all probability Daikoku's connection with agriculture is due to the mixture of Buddhism and Shintoism which has caused him to be worshiped interchangeably with a Shinto god, Ohō-kuni-nushi-no-kami.

they symbolize wealth's destroyer. But the attribute is no doubt added because Daikoku's festival falls on the Day of the Rat.[1]

He carries, slung over his shoulder, a well-filled treasure sack. In his right hand he holds his magic mallet or hammer, marked with the outline of the *tama*, or sacred gem. The hammer is one of the *Takara-mono*, and is popularly believed to produce wealth if it is diligently wielded; it is also thought to be filled with treasure and that fortune comes to its happy possessor. It is called the Hammer of Happiness. But a deeper significance was, no doubt, intended, for the oldest records refer to it as the "Creative Mallet." The *Sha-ho Bukuro* reads: "He holds in his hands a hammer by which he incorporates the Yo and In [Yang and Yin], or male and female principles, and so leads to the evolution of all things." The three rings on the *tama* also "embody the spirit of the Yo and In, in token of the god being a creative divinity." The hammer is also drawn with the *tomoye* (two comma-like forms within a circle) or the *mitsu-tomoye* (three comma-like forms within a circle), which replace the *tama*. The hammer is used in the ceremony called Tsuchi-no-In; this consists of symbolic signs made with the hammer, which is moved in various ways to the accompaniment of a recitation of a *mantra*, or magic formula.

The oldest Japanese representations of Daikoku show him, without the rice bales, standing upon a lotus leaf. The

1 "The Day of the Rat" is Kasshi (Ki no E Ne) of the sexagesimal cycle (sixty days or sixty years). Black is the color that belongs to this point of the compass (north) entitled that of the rat; cf. Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue*, p. 35. This may also account for the color of the old images of Daikoku. The subject of the old Japanese chronology is of interest, but is too involved for this book. A concise account is given in B. H. Chamberlain's *Things Japanese*, article, "Time," pp. 474–479.

hammer and sack were added in the eighth century by Kobo Daishi, to whom Daikoku appeared in a vision.

In many of the old books the Rokku Daikoku, or the Six Daikokus, are shown. They are: Makara Daikoku, the ordinary form of the god, with hammer and sack; Oji-kara Daikoku, a youthful figure, with a sword in his right hand and a *sanko* in the left; Yasha Daikoku, a youth with the wheel of the law in his right hand; Shinda Daikoku, a boy, holding a *tama* in his left hand; Makakara Daikoku, dressed as a woman, with a small bale of rice on her head; Biku Daikoku, in the garb of a nun, with hammer and sword.

Another curious form of the god is called San-Men Daikoku, or the Three-Faced Daikoku. The profile of Bishamon is on the left, and that of Benten on the right, and the familiar face of Daikoku in the center; there is but a single body, but, sometimes, there are six arms, those of Bishamon holding spear and pagoda; those of Benten, the sacred key and *tama;* those of Daikoku, a mallet and bag. It is said that the deity thus appeared to Dengio Daishi after he had built the monastery of Enriaku-ji.

An old New Year's custom apparently no longer exists; beggars donned a mask representing Daikoku's face and carried a mallet; they went about begging alms in his name, and as he was the god of wealth, they were not driven from the house.

EBISU

(God of Daily Food)

Of the Seven Household Gods, Ebisu is the only one of entirely native origin; he is a Shinto contribution. He was the third son of the revered creators of the Island Empire, Izanagi and Izanami, and the brother of Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, and of Susa-no-o, the dragon slayer. He was born a

From a drawing by Hokusai

THREE-FACED DAIKOKU

cripple, and even when he was three years old he could not stand upon his feet; for this reason his celestial parents placed him in "the Heavenly Boat of adamantine camphor wood and turned him adrift to the winds." Thus it happened that the skiff came to shore in the province of Settsu, which was inhabited by the early people of Japan. Though these people were of barbarous race, their simple minds were impressed by the miraculous saving from the waves of the crippled Ebisu. His divine origin was at once acknowledged, and a temple was erected in his honor.

Etymology gives two versions of the significance of his name. Some give it as "Yebisu," which signifies "barbarous"; and others as "Ebisu," *ebi* or *emi*, meaning "to smile." The former interpretation corresponds with the legend of his deification by a barbarous people, and the latter meaning is suggestive of the common representation of the deity, which always bears a broadly smiling countenance. It is for this reason that Ebisu is sometimes called the god of happiness.

The earliest drawings, which are probably not more than two hundred years old, depict him as he is depicted today. He is represented in ancient Japanese costume as a fisherman; his fishing-rod usually has the red-skinned *tai* dangling at the end of the line, and his basket contains a good catch of the same highly prized fish.[1] Ebisu is the patron deity of fishermen, and merchants pray to him for success in trade. He is referred to as the god of plenty, of daily food, and of the markets; and is often placed with Daikoku, the God of Riches. A great festival is held in his honor on the twentieth of the tenth month; this is Ebisu's month, for he is the only

[1] Ebisu's connection with the fish is probably due to his association with the early sun myths, with which water was always related. The story of his sailing away to the western sea is suggestive of the setting sun.

one of the eight million Shinto deities who does not desert his proper shrine and go to the great temple of Izumo. His reason for not accompanying the others is that he is deaf and does not hear the summons. His particular shrine is at Mio-no-Seki.

When the silence of a Shinto temple is broken by the clapping of hands to attract the attention of the gods to the supplication of the worshipers, Ebisu's name may well be recalled, for it is said by the devout that it was he who originated the custom.

HOTEI
(God of Happiness)

Though claimed by Buddhism, Hotei, the jovial, the rotund, was a Chinese Taoist priest in the tenth century. Originally, there were sixteen Arhats, or disciples of Buddha, but later Hotei was added as the last incarnation of Miroku (Maitreya), the Buddhist Messiah, for it was believed that he had only once more to pass through human experience to become the Buddha.

His name, Hotei, means "hempen sack," and, as he always carried a large cloth bag, he became known as the "priest with a hempen sack." According to E-hon-koji-dan, he was fat almost beyond belief, with a wrinkled forehead and a jovial expression. He loved children and was accustomed to go into the street to play with them.

He could sleep in the snow without injury; if it rained, he took his straw sandals and went his way; if, on the contrary, the weather was fine, he wore his wooden rain sandals and squatted on the ground.

In his travels through the country he lived the life of a vagabond, combining the craft of a fortune-teller with the vocation

of a begging priest. His constant good nature endeared him to all people and he became the symbol of philosophical contentment. He represented a type universally loved and which may be found in our own St. Nicholas, who exhibits many of the characteristics of Hotei: a face free from lines of care and worry and ill-temper; a body built on generous proportions; and a heart full of wholesome good nature.

The attributes of Hotei are always his sack, and usually a fan of ancient Chinese design, and a rosary; sometimes, too, he has a clam-shell, such as was used for a begging-bowl by itinerant priests. His sack was put to many uses: it was a receptacle for the Takara-mono, or Precious Things; a mattress upon which he could take his rest; sometimes it was filled with gifts for the children, or was used as a trap for little boys and girls.

The popular estimate of Hotei, in spite of his supernatural qualities, is less that of a god than of a merry fellow whose heart still retains a boyish love and understanding of children. It is written that in the third year of Teimei of the dynasty of Ryo (907–912 A.D.), while seated upon a stone under the eastern portals of the convent of Gaku-rin, "he passed away from this life. Not long afterwards the people saw a person of another country go by with the wallet of the master. And on this account the faithful vied with each other in making the images of Hotei."

In Japan, at the present day, when the people go to the temple of Inari at Kyōto they buy small burnt-clay statues of Hotei. These they take home and place upon a stage close to the kitchen oven. This stage is called the "stage of Hotei." If all the statues are preserved from year to year for seven years, it is considered a token of good luck. The statues are then buried in the temple grounds.

BENZAITEN OR BENTEN

(Goddess of Beauty and of Music)

Many writers have suggested that two different deities are indicated by the names Benzaiten and Benten, believing that Benzaiten is strictly a Buddhist deity, and that Benten is a frankly secular goddess of Japanese origin. It is probably true that two different deities are merged in the familiar form of the goddess, for the characteristics of the early Buddhist form are distinctly discernible in the popular conception, but to the common people Benten is simply an abbreviation of the name Benzaiten.

In the Rig-Veda and other old Brahmanic books we read of Sarasvati, the goddess of speech and of learning, the patroness of science, and the inventor of the Sanskrit language. In the earliest myths she was identified with an important river deity, Sarasvati, meaning "rich in waters," and being one of the largest rivers in India. As water plays so large a part in the production of crops, she is also referred to as the goddess of fertility, as the "best of mothers," and is believed to have the power of bestowing offspring on her suppliants. Sometimes she is mentioned as the wife of Indra, and again as a musician in the suite of Indra. In these confused details can clearly be seen at least a partial prototype of Benten.

Benten is the one feminine member of the little group of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune. She is at once the personification of ideal womanhood, and the goddess of the sea; she is also the goddess of music, of beauty, of learning, of eloquence, and is called Mio-o-ten, the "goddess of the beautiful voice." Rightly is the attribute of eloquence given to the Sea Goddess, for "is not the sea the most eloquent of speakers,

the eternal poet, chanter of the mystic hymn, whose mighty syllables no man may learn?"[1]

Most of her shrines are built on islands or artificial islands in ponds, the most important of which is on the beautiful island of Enoshima, in a cavern so wild and awe-inspiring that it is closed during stormy weather by the height of the waves.

Benten is often represented with a serpent or a dragon coiled around the rock upon which she is seated. This at once attests her connection with water, and it is said that her cult appeared in Japan on the "Day of the Snake." In deference to this association snakes are to this day held sacred in many parts of Japan, especially at Enoshima.

Benten is portrayed as a graceful woman, wearing the sacred stole and a mantle of azure. Her crown has several different forms: sometimes it is surmounted by a *hō-ō*, or phoenix; sometimes it has three flaming *tamas;* and again — and this is a more modern conception — it is surmounted by a Shinto *torii*[2] beneath which is coiled a white snake having the face of an ancient man with white and overhanging eyebrows.

According to a Chinese legend, Pe-sse (in Japanese "Haku-ja," "the white snake") was a woman whom Buddha changed into a white snake that under this form she might expiate, during a succession of years, the sins of her previous states of existence.

After one thousand years had gone by, Buddha decided that she should give birth to the star Wen-sing, which presides over literature, and for that purpose allowed her to resume a human form and become the wife of Hanwen. When her term was nearly

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* p. 96.

[2] The *torii* was probably added to Benten's head-dress by the Shintoists as a distinctive emblem of their faith when the goddess was taken over from Buddhism and included in the Shinto pantheon.

ended, a great light shone about the whole of the house where she dwelt, and at last the star Wen-sing made its appearance, ... and Pe-sse, her punishment now ended, was received into the kingdom of the Deva."[1]

Benten's ability to do many things is often expressed by four or eight hands, each holding a different Buddhist symbol: the *goko*-hilted sword, the wheel, the axe, the rope, the bow and arrow, the *tama*, and the key.

Often the goddess is represented in a much more simple form: the great crown is replaced by a small tiara, and the richly decorated attire by a simple flowing robe, while the Buddhist symbols give place to the *biwa*, a stringed instrument similar to the lute, of which she is said to have been the inventress.

She is often surrounded by her fifteen sons, who symbolize the principal occupations of life. They are all youthful figures with long, straight hair; they are clad in Chinese dress, and each bears his special attribute. The following list is taken from the *Butsu-zo-dzu-i:* Inyaku: a transformation of Gautama Buddha, his attributes, a *tama* and a key; Kwantai or Seki-on: a transformation of Fugen, his attribute, a girdle, said to be emblematic of magistrature; Hikken or Kōsei: his attributes, brush and ink-stone for writing; Konzai: a transformation of Yakushi, god of medicine, his attribute, a balance for weighing drugs; Tochu or Daijin: a transformation of Monju, his attributes, sheaves of rice and *tama;* Keisho or Akujo: a transformation of Jizo, his attribute, a grain-measure; Hanki: a transformation of Sendan-ko-butsu, his attribute, a rice-box; Isho or Jōki: a transformation of Marishi-ten, his attribute, a bundle of clothing; San-yo: a

[1] Carlo Puini, "Il sette Genii della felicita," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan,* VIII (1880), p. 458, note 41.

transformation of Seishi, attribute, silkworms on a tray; Shusen: attributes, a wine-vessel and a *tama;* Ai-kiō: a transformation of Kwannon, attributes, a bow and arrows; Shomio or Saikoku: a transformation of Miroku, attributes, a sword and a *tama;* Jiū-sha: attribute, three *tamas;* Giu-ba: attributes, a horse and an ox; Sen-sha: attributes, a boat and a wagon containing rice bales.

TA-MON-TEN
(Bishamon, *God of War*)

Although one of the Seven Household Gods, Bishamon[1] is seldom invoked on the home altar. His province is the field of military power and glory, and he is one of the guardians of heaven. He is the Chinese Ta-wan, the God of Riches, and the Japanese Ta-mon. Both of these are derived from the great Brahmanic god, Vais-ramana, "the glorious one," and Kuvera, one of the Four Kings of Heaven who stand at the four sides of Mount Meru, the "central mount" or, in Brahmanic mythology, the axis of the world, on the summit of which dwell the thirty-three Deva kings. The eastern side of the mountain is gold, the western of silver, the southern of lapis-lazuli, and the northern of crystal. In this northern region, Bishamon is believed to have his abode and to guard it well. He is regarded as the god of war, but it is also believed that "to those who pray to him, he can grant good fortune more swiftly than the flight of an arrow from the bow."

The first appearance of Bishamon in Japan was during the war between Shotoku Taishi and Moriya, who opposed the introduction of Buddhism into Japan. Prince Shotoku Taishi

[1] Ta-mon-ten is the Japanese name, but Bishamon, the Sanskrit one, is of far greater familiarity and is used almost exclusively by writers and by dealers in Japanese antiquities.

made sacrifices to the four guardians of heaven, and carved images of them in his helmet. During the battle his life was saved by Bishamon, who appeared to him in the form of an old man. Thereafter, Bishamon's aid was sought by warriors, and he has become the patron of the soldiers of Japan.

He is represented in foreign dress, colored in accordance with Tartar taste, but closely resembling an ancient Indian warrior. He is sometimes in golden armor. He carries a spear in one hand, and in the other a small pagoda[1] in which are contained the relics of the ancient Buddhas. For some reason the centipede is sacred to him and forms his crest.

He is sometimes shown with his consort Kichi-joten, who is occasionally seen supporting the feet of her lord upon her shoulders, but more commonly he is standing upon an *oni* (devil), typifying his power of subduing evil.[2]

FUKU-ROKU-JU

(God of Good Fortune and Longevity)

Fuku-roku-ju, with his supernaturally high head, is probably a reincarnation of Lao Tsŭ, the founder of Taoism. From China comes this strange story:

In the year 1086, there lived an old man in the capital of China. He was only three feet tall, and his head was nearly half his height. Every day he went into the city and foretold the future to the people. With the proceeds of his prophetic trade he bought wine, and when he had drunk fully he would strike his head and say: "I am a sage and can bestow the gift

[1] Originally, a pagoda was built to contain the relics of a holy person. See article "Pagoda."

[2] The ancient idea of representing a deity standing upon a human form probably arose from a yet more ancient idea of representing the earth as a human being, an idea which, in India, gave rise to the creation of a special group of supernatural creatures, the *vahana* (vehicles), on which the Hindu gods are carried.

of long life." A certain man having seen him, painted his portrait and presented it to the emperor, who summoned the strange being to the palace and, after regaling him with wine, asked him how many years he numbered. The old man made no reply, but told many stories of past ages and then suddenly vanished, no one knew whither. On the following morning it was announced that the light of the South Pole Star had, on the previous evening, touched the imperial palace. The emperor then comprehended that his strange guest was the incarnation of the Star of Longevity, and he preserved his portrait with deep veneration.[1]

Fuku-roku-ju is represented as short of body, but with an enormous head development due to his profound thought and study and his prolonged meditations. He is dressed in the ancient garb of the scholar. His attributes are a crooked staff on which hangs a manuscript roll. An addition, probably from Buddhism, is the *tama*, or sacred gem of omnipotent wisdom. The hairy-tailed tortoise, the crane, and the deer, all emblematic of longevity, are often placed with him.

His name signifies: *fuku*, "luck" and "happiness"; *roku*, "wealth" and "prosperity"; and *ju*, "longevity." On New Year's Day a favorite kakemono combination, interpreting his name, is used among the decorations. The middle picture shows the sun and waves, signifying long life (*ju*), on the right, rice grains, delicately drawn, stand for wealth (*roku*), and on the left is the cotton plant, for happiness (*fuku*), its golden corolla and silvery fruit suggesting felicity.

Popular artists have taken many liberties with this venerable scholar. He is shown in a hundred different ways, his preternaturally tall head a constant jest. Sometimes a troublesome mosquito is seen on its summit, and Fuku-roku-ju makes

[1] Carlo Puini, "Il sette Genii della felicita," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* VIII (1880), p. 461.

a vain attempt to reach it. Again, it is only by the aid of a ladder that his barber can shave the top of this mountain of knowledge!

JU-RO-JIN

(God of Longevity and Wisdom)

From the descriptions given by the older authors, Ju-ro-jin seems to be but a variant of Fuku-roku-ju; but the modern artist, though giving him similar attributes, depicts a very different type of deity. He is shown as a tall old man with a white beard, but without the elongated head. He is of solemn mien, dressed in the long robes of a scholar, and wearing a mitered cap upon which is sometimes drawn the circle of the sun. He often carries in one hand a fan, and in the other a pole on which hang manuscript rolls similar to the one carried by Fuku-roku-ju. The pine, the plum, and the bamboo are often drawn with him, as emblems of longevity. The stork, the deer, and the tortoise also accompany him as they accompany Fuku-roku-ju.

In the oldest pictures there are many different conceptions of these two similar deities, and there are also many intermediate representations. In the old Chinese books a story is told of the constellation of the South Star, which presides over human life. In this constellation is the Star of the Well. When it shines in the full splendor of its light, peace and tranquillity reign throughout the land. This star possesses an influence on the term of human life, and is associated with Ju-ro-jin as the constellation is associated with Fuku-roku-ju. Popular usage has given Ju-ro-jin the appellation of "God of Wisdom and of Long Life," and on birthday celebrations or at any time when it is desired to express a wish for long life, a picture of Ju-ro-jin is brought forth.

IZANAGI AND IZANAMI
(Those Who Created)

The *Ko-ji-ki*, or *Records of Ancient Matters*, dating from about 712 A.D., is the most important Shinto book. It contains a curiously confused account of the primitive conceptions concerning the creation of the world, the gods, and man, that were entertained by the early Japanese. These stories are entirely free from Buddhistic influence.

Izanagi and Izanami, whose names means the "Male-Who-Invites" and the "Female-Who-Invites," were commanded by the heavenly *kami* (gods) to make and consolidate the drifting lands. Accordingly, they stood upon the floating bridge of heaven and plunged their jewel-spear into the unstable waters beneath, and stirred them until they gurgled and congealed; they then drew forth the spear, and the drops that fell from it formed the first islands of Japan. Upon this land the creative pair descended and proceeded to the creation of other gods, the minerals and plants, and, finally, of man. The gods were created from the various portions of the bodies of Izanagi and Izanami: Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, from the rinsings of the august body of Izanagi after his bath in a running stream of water; the Fire God, from the body of Izanami, thereby sending her, in a dying condition, into the nether world, where she was rescued by her lord Izanagi after most exciting and revolting experiences.

There are but few shrines erected to Izanagi and Izanami, and they are seldom depicted in art. Occasionally they are drawn in the act of throwing the jewel-spear from the bridge of heaven.

In Kinomoto, on the east coast of Japan, beneath a high cliff, is believed to lie buried the body of Izanami. In February and October, a *shime-nawa* (*q.v.*), straw rope, is stretched

from the summit of this cliff to the trunk of a pine tree below. It is the occasion of great festivities, and flowers in abundance are offered up to the goddess.

AMATERASU-O-MI-KAMI
(The Sun Goddess)

The Sun Goddess, the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, the divine daughter of Izanagi and Izanami, is the most important of the Shinto deities. Her shrine at Isé is the Mecca of Japan. The lovely goddess, sending her "divine rays" upon earth, caused the rice fields to flourish and the newly created land to become beautiful.

The story of her retirement into a cave is one of the best known of Japanese myths, and accounts for the origin of many of the arts.

Amaterasu's brother, Susa-no-o, the "Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness," ruler of the moon, and (perhaps because of his name) called the god of storms, was jealous of the devotion paid to his sister, and broke down the earth walls between the rice fields and filled the ditches. Finally, one day, he caught a piebald colt which he skinned alive and threw into the room where the Sun Goddess and her maidens sat weaving the bright-colored garments for the gods. The startled goddess injured her hand with her shuttle, and was so horrified at her brother's act of vandalism that she ran to a cave and hid herself from the eyes of gods and men. "Then the whole Plain of High Heaven was obscured and eternal night prevailed." The eight hundred myriad deities assembled in divine assembly to endeavor to think of a plan that would induce the irate goddess to leave her retreat. Cocks, "the long-singing birds of perpetual night," were made to crow. A mirror was made, the first ever invented, in which it was planned that the

Sun Goddess would see, on the burnished surface, her own reflection and suspect the presence of a rival. To induce her forth, Uzumē, Goddess of Mirth, was made to dance before the cave, waving in her hands a bamboo branch on which were tied small bells, the tinkling sound of which attracted the attention of Amaterasu. The gestures and physical display of Uzumē caused noisy expressions of mirth among the other gods, and the Sun Goddess could repress her curiosity no longer, and peeped from her hiding-place. The mirror was instantly held before her face, and she beheld her own unsurpassed beauty, but, not recognizing her own features, she was immediately consumed with jealousy and chagrin, and stepped forth from the cave! The *shime-nawa*, or straw rope, was stretched before the entrance of her cavern, and the world was saved from further calamity, for the sun once more shone in the heavens.

This legend is the chief element in Shinto worship, and from Uzumē's dance sprang Japanese serious drama. "It is obvious that it simply represents, as used for the enticing of the Sun Goddess, the ordinary process employed in appeasing or evoking the spirits of the dead, who in early days were often buried in natural caves."[1]

SUSA-NO-O
(Deliverer)

Susa-no-o, the Impetuous-Male, brother of the Sun Goddess, was born from the nose of the creator Izanagi. He it was who by his violent actions caused the Sun Goddess to retire into a cave and so to cause darkness to fall upon the earth. Susa-no-o's name is also connected with the famous

[1] William Ridgeway, *Dramas and Dramatic Dances*, p. 304.

sword "Cloud Cluster," and he is considered the Perseus of Japan, for he delivered a fair maiden from the eight-headed serpent. By giving the monster eight tubs of *saké*, one for each head, it became so intoxicated that he had no difficulty in severing the eight heads from the body. As the serpent lay writhing he drew from its tail a sword of divine temper; this sword has become a prominent feature of many of the stories belonging to the early heroic ages of Japan. Susa-no-o is considered by some writers to be the god of the moon and the ancestor of the monarchs of the province of Izumo.

UZUME

(Goddess of Mirth)

"There is no greater favorite with artists, dancers, musicians, and people generally, than the story of the laughing goddess, Uzumē." She it was who enticed the Sun Goddess from her cave by performing before its entrance her famous dance, thus giving back the sunshine to a darkened world. Her familiar face, with its narrow forehead, with its shaven eyebrows, replaced by the *hohotsu* or imperial patches stuck high above the eyes, which are still worn by ladies of rank; straight black hair, fat cheeks, and laughing, impudent expression, is a common subject in art. Masks, statuettes, and *netsukés* are often fashioned in her likeness, and famous artists have painted her as she danced before the cave. To this day, in Shinto temples, priestesses perform the Kagura dance, which is the dance of Uzumē. They dress in simple white garments over which are thrown robes of bright *nishiki*. In one hand they hold the *suzu*, an instrument with bronze bells in imitation of Uzumē's bamboo branch, and in the other hand they carry the *gohei*, those strange offerings to the gods.

INARI

(God or Goddess of Rice)

The name "Inari" signifies "rice-man," and is written with two Chinese characters meaning "rice-bearing,"[1] but there is some confusion as to the sex of the deity, who is represented sometimes as a woman, and sometimes as a white-bearded man carrying a sheaf of rice. Inari is also depicted riding upon a fox — his messenger, and his temples are usually guarded by a pair of foxes; in fact, in many places the worship of the deity is overshadowed by a weird fox-cult.

To the common people, Inari is one of the most important of the Shinto deities, and is prayed to for all agricultural prosperity. He is revered not only as the god of rice but as a healer, and as one having the power to bestow wealth — "perhaps because all the wealth of old Japan was reckoned in *koku* [bales] of rice."[2]

The popular Shinto temple at Fushimi, near Kyōto, is similar in character to thousands of Inari temples scattered over Japan. It was founded in 711 A.D., when Inari, as the goddess of rice, is said to have appeared near-by to Kobo Daishi. This temple is regarded with especial reverence by swordsmiths, for Inari is said to have assisted the famous smith Kokaju to forge one of his mighty swords and to have tested its blade on a rock near the temple. This story is used in one of the *Nō* dramas.

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[1] "His name may be a derivation from *ine*, rice in a growing state, and *ri*, a termination implying personality."—W. G. Aston, *Shinto: The Way of the Gods*, p. 162.

[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 314.

KOSHIN
(God of the Roads)

Inseparably connected with Koshin, the God of Roads, is the ape. An image of the god is seldom seen, but his presence is revealed by the statues or bas-reliefs of his servants, the three mystic monkeys: Mi-saru, the blind monkey who covers his eyes with his hands and will see no evil; Kika-saru, the deaf money who covers his ears with his hands and will hear no evil; and Iwa-saru, the dumb monkey who covers his mouth with his hands and will speak no evil. These three familiar figures are seen carved in relief on stone slabs along the country roadsides of Japan; and as ivory, wooden, or composition statues they are among the most common of Japanese *objets d'art*, carrying to mankind their simple lesson of right living.

The statues of the god himself vary. Lafcadio Hearn describes an old one which —

> shows signs of Hindu inspiration, in which the god is shown with three eyes opening vertically in the middle of the forehead, six arms, holding respectively a monkey, a serpent, a wheel, a sword, a rosary, and a scepter. Serpents are coiled around his wrists and ankles. At his feet is the head of a demon, Amanagaku; three eyes are carved on the pedestal and one on the high tiara, in the shape of a mitre, placed on the god's head.[1]

The association of Koshin with the ape seems to have arisen from the curious idea of deifying certain days of the year. Koshin seems to be the deification of that day of the month that corresponds to the fifty-seventh term of the Chinese sexagenary cycle, and which is called in Japan, Ka-no-e-saru; this is the day of the monkey, and recurs every two months. Festivals in honor of Koshin are held on this day, and offer-

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 100.

ings are placed before the image of the god or before his three mystic monkeys.

Through a confusion of ideas the Shinto God Saruda (his name having *saru*, "monkey," as its root) is often used interchangeably with Koshin. The descriptions of Saruda do not correspond with those of Koshin, but he has been adopted as the god of roads by the Shintoists, and he claims the three monkeys as his representatives. He is described as —

> a god with a nose seven cubits long and great eyes like mirrors. When Ninigi, with five associates, went from heaven at the command of the Sun Goddess to rule over Japan, this formidable-looking being blocked the way. He was disarmed by the display of the charms of Uzumē, Goddess of Mirth.[1]

TEN-JIN

(God of Scholarship and Calligraphy)

Ten-jin, who was deified by the Shintoists as the god of calligraphy, was Sugawara-no-Michizane, a minister and scholar of the eighth century. He was a victim of calumny and was banished to the island of Kyushu, the place to which illustrious exiles were sent. He lived but two years after his banishment, during which time he rode about on an ox, and to this day students and calligraphists have upon their deity-shelves the image of an ox. The image is also often placed in the grounds of the temples dedicated to him.

Ten-jin is represented in the robes of an ancient court noble, riding upon an ox, and carrying a plum branch in his hand. His crest is a conventionalized plum blossom, five circles grouped around a central circle, for he loved to study and meditate beneath the branches of a plum tree, and tradition

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[1] William Anderson, *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of a Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, p. 60.

says that at the time of his exile the most beautiful plum tree in his garden at Kyōto flew after him to the island of Kyushu, where it is still shown. Plum trees are also planted in the grounds of the Shinto shrines that are erected to Ten-jin.

In Kitsuki, on July 25, a festival, Ten-jin Matsuri, is held in his honor. Booths are erected near the temple and hundreds of the schoolboys of Kitsuki send samples of their best writing to be exhibited in the booths.

Ten-jin is also known as Kan Shajo and Tammangu.

KIKU-JIDO
(The Hermit)

Kiku-jido is a Shinto god, the son of one of the old mikados. After living a life of gayety at his father's court, he became weary of the frivolities of the world and retired to the mountains, where he devoted his time to meditation and prayer. Tradition tells that he subsisted upon the dew that gathered each night on the petals of the chrysanthemum, the Japanese name for which is *kiku*, hence his name Kiku-jido. This is probably based on an older story of a favorite of the Chinese emperor Muh Wang, who accidentally touched with his foot the pillow of the emperor and was exiled to the mountains. Before he left the court, however, the emperor taught him a sacred sentence insuring safety and long life. The nobleman, fearing that he might forget the sacred syllables, painted them on the petals of the chrysanthemum, and the dew, washing away the words each night, became the elixir of youth!

Kiku-jido is represented with long black hair, and is clad in a richly brocaded robe, usually decorated with borders and clusters of chrysanthemums; he holds in his hand a single *kiku* blossom.

RO-SHI: LAO TSU
(The Founder of Taoism)

With his high, capacious head, long white beard, and enlarged ear-lobes, Lao Tsŭ, the venerable founder of Taoism, bears a striking resemblance to the Japanese god of good fortune, Fuku-roku-ju. According to Chinese records, he was born in the second month of the Dragon Year of Wu Ting, which makes him a contemporary of Confucius. He is described as "a superior man, who liked to keep in obscurity."

Taoism (*tao*, meaning "the way") is a philosophy of much interest.

It was the simplicity of spontaneity, action (which might be called non-action) without motive, free from all selfish purpose, resting in nothing but its own accomplishment. This is found in the phenomena of the material world. All things spring up without a word spoken and grow without a claim for their production. They go through their processes without any display of pride in them; and the results are realized without any assumption of ownership. It is owing to the absence of such assumption that the results and their processes do not disappear. It only needs the same quality in the arrangements and measures of government to make society beautiful and happy. A government conducted by sages would free the hearts of the people from inordinate desires, fill their bellies, keep their ambitions feeble and strengthen their bones. They would constantly keep the people without knowledge, and free from desires; and where there were those who had knowledge, they would have them so that they would not dare to put it in practice. A corresponding course observed by individual man in his government of himself, becoming again "as a little child," will have corresponding results. His constant virtue will be complete and he will return to the primitive simplicity.[1]

[1] From the *Tâo Teh King*, probably an authentic work of Lao Tsŭ.

Such were the teachings of this gentle sage as he labored in the library of Chau, in the valley of the Han.

He is represented in several different ways, such as riding on an ox — recalling his travels. The most common portrayal of him, however, is in company with the Buddha and Confucius, all three of the great teachers profoundly studying the Yang and Yin, a diagram representing the active or male, and the passive or female, principles in Nature, and which is of basic importance in Chinese philosophy. He is also one of the wine-tasters in the picture of the "Three Religions," where he is usually seen discoursing on the mysteries of the sacred diagram.

TOBOSAKU
("The Peach Eater")

In Chinese writings Tobosaku or T'ung Fang so, "the peach eater," is an historical personage, an adviser of the Emperor Wu Tu. He is credited with extraordinary learning, and was believed to possess magical powers. Many stories are told of him.

The legend upon which the ordinary representations are founded is probably as follows: When the fairy Si Wang Mu descended from her mountain home to visit the emperor, she brought with her seven "peaches of immortality." She ate two, and when the emperor wanted to preserve the seeds she told him that the tree bore only once in three thousand years. She then perceived T'ung Fangso peeping at her through the window, and, pointing at him said: That child whom you see yonder has stolen three of my peaches and is now nine thousand years of age.[1]

In Chinese and Japanese paintings, Tobosaku is represented as an old man, merrily dancing, and holding in his arms a large peach.

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[1] Henri L. Joly, *Legend in Japanese Art*, p. 368.

A passage in *Sha-ho Bukuro* says that Tobosaku is probably identical with Ju-ro-jin.

GAMA SENNIN

(The Toad-Accompanied Immortal)

Gama Sennin is a Japanese appellation of a Taoist *Sennin* (*q.v.*) who lived in the mountains and had for his companion a frog or toad. This accounts for his name, *gama*, meaning "toad." Little else is told of him, except that in some of the old books he is sometimes identified with a mysterious drug-seller whose face was somewhat frog-like in contour and expression, and who was once seen, while bathing, to assume the form of a frog.

He is usually represented as poorly clad, and with a flat, unpleasant face. The frog or toad is his constant companion; it is white-skinned and three-legged, and is sometimes shown with a cloud escaping from its mouth in which may be seen the mirage of a walled city. The origin and significance of this is obscure.

SHOTOKU TAISHI

(One of the Promoters of Buddhism)

Shotoku Taishi (572–621 A.D.) is one of the most familiar names in Japanese history. He strengthened the establishment of Buddhism in Japan; founded several monasteries; formed a code of laws; and is said to have introduced the calendar into the Island Empire.

He is often represented in the glory of his victory over Moriya, the great advocate of the Shinto faith.

He is said to have been both a painter and sculptor, but this statement is hardly probable.

KOBO DAISHI
(The Learned Teacher of Law)

Kōbō Daishi is the posthumous title given by the Emperor Daigo in 912 A.D. to Kukai, one of the most famous of Japanese Buddhist priests. The name signifies "the great teacher spreading abroad the law." He was renowned as a priest, painter, sculptor, calligraphist, and traveler.

Kukai was born in Shikoku in the eighth century. His birth was miraculous, as he was believed to have come into the world with folded praying hands. He entered the priesthood in 793. During his novitiate he was subjected to many trials by evil spirits; dragons and other monsters came from the sea and disturbed him in his devotions. He drove them away by spitting at them the rays of the evening star. In 804 he was sent to China, where he became the favorite disciple of the great Hui-kwo, and he devoted much of his time to a diligent study of painting and calligraphy.

> He rose to mastership in the grand style of the Tang school and is the paragon of Japanese writers and one of the greatest of her artists. His work has great simplicity, but enormous power.[1]

He is also said to have invented the Hiragana syllabary, which was the first syllabary for the Japanese language alone, without recourse to the Chinese.

When he returned from China he brought a large number of Buddhist books and devotional objects, and with them the tenets of the Shignon sect, which he founded in Japan. This sect deals largely with mystic formulae and magic incantations. He afterwards established the great monastery of Koyasan

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[1] Ernest Francisco Fenollosa, "An Outline of Japanese Art," *Century Magazine*, L (1898), p. 71.

in Kishu, and there, in incessant labor and devotion, he spent the last days of his life. It is said that he did not die, but merely retired into a tomb, where he is believed still to await the coming of Miroku (Maitreya), the Buddhist Messiah.

BINZURU

(Worshiped as a Healer)

Binzuru was originally one of the sixteen chosen disciples of Buddha, but he violated his vows by gazing upon the beauty of a woman. For this offense his statue has always been placed outside the sanctum. He is a much revered personage, however, and is especially venerated by the lower classes, for it is said that Buddha endowed him with the power of curing all human ills. His image becomes entirely rubbed smooth, and his features sometimes obliterated, by devotees, who believe that relief from their pain may be obtained by touching the image of their beloved healer.

DARUMA

(A Buddhist Priest)

Daruma, one of the most famous of the early Buddhist priests, was the twenty-eighth patriarch of Buddhism in succession from Kasyapa.

He was born in Southern India in the early part of the sixth century, and was the son of a king of the Kashis. From India he went as a missionary to China, and from there crossed the water to Korea and Japan. He taught the doctrine of contemplation, and founded the Zen sect,[1] whose tenets are

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[1] Zen or Contemplative sect. The word *zen* is a shortened form of the term *zenna,* which is a translation into Chinese of the Sanskrit word *dhyana,* "contemplation."

called "the doctrine of thought transmitted by thought, that is, transmitted without words either spoken or written."

Many legends cling to his holy name, and representations of the saint are found by the thousand in the homes and temples of Japan. His image is even used as a sign by tobacconists, and as a toy by children!

The well-known tale of Daruma's long meditation, which lasted nine years, accounts for the familiar figures of him. During this time he sat, cross-legged, his face turned towards the wall of a monastery on Mount Su. His legs finally withered and fell off! This legendary mishap has for centuries been the subject of comical drawings and carvings. The toys that have long amused the Japanese children represent squatting red men, without legs, so made that when they are thrown down they bob up again into a sitting posture. In the winter time snow men are made in the traditional form of Daruma, and a lighted candle is placed in a niche in the abdomen, the snow thus melting away. The saint is occasionally represented as yawning and stretching, as if coming back to consciousness after a long sleep. In rare examples he is shown as having regained his lost legs.

Legend also associates Daruma's name with the supernatural origin of the tea plant. Once, during the famous meditation, he was overpowered by sleep. On awakening, he was filled with shame and self-contempt. Taking his knife, he snipped off his guilty, sleep-heavy lids, and cast them from him. They took root where they fell, and from them sprang the wondrous tea plant, the leaves of which have the magic quality of driving sleep from weary lids. It was ever after valued by holy men and was used by them in the temples.

Occasionally, Daruma is shown standing upon a leaf. This is commemorative of his miraculous crossing from China to

Korea on a rush leaf. The depiction of another uncommon legend shows him carrying one shoe in his hand. It is said that three years after his death and ceremonious burial, he was seen in the western mountains of China traveling towards India, and holding a shoe in his right hand. The emperor had his tomb opened. It was found empty, save for one shoe! But the familiar likeness of Daruma that has come down to us is a lidless, legless man carrying a priest's fly-brush in his hand, the red cloak of his order about his shoulders.

RAKAN: ARHAT
(Disciple of Buddha)

The original meaning of the word *arhat* (Sanskrit for *rakan*) was, probably, "one deserving worship." Arhatship implies the possession of supernatural powers, the exemption from transmigration, and successive promotions to Buddhahood and Nirvana. Properly, however, the term *arhat* means an advanced disciple of Shaka (Gautama Buddha), and the term includes the twelve hundred disciples of Shaka as well as the smaller group of five hundred, and the especially selected number of eighteen disciples who are to appear upon earth as Buddhas. In Japan the group of eighteen has been reduced to sixteen, and is frequently depicted.

The disciples are portrayed with shaven heads surrounded by a halo; they have heavy eyebrows, and large pendant earlobes; they are dressed in the flowing robes of the Buddhist priest. Each of them has a different attribute, but precise identification is very difficult. Although it does not accord with many well-known representations, the following list is given by Anderson (the long Chinese names are omitted):

1. An aged man seated upon a rock by the seashore, holding tablets and a short fly-brush.

2. Usually seated in a priestly chair, holding a long fly-brush.

3. Holding a manuscript roll; an acolyte standing by his side strikes a bowl-gong.

4. Seated on a mat, hands folded on knees.

5. Seated on a priest's chair, holding a rosary.

6. Seated on a rock, a tiger crouching at his feet; sometimes holding a ringed staff.

7. Seated on a rock, reading a sacred scroll.

8. Seated on a stool, holding a knotted staff.

9. Seated on a chair, a lotus pedestal by his side; occasionally accompanied by a lion.

10. Seated on a rock, holding up a sacred gem, which may be either of the usual form with conical summit and transverse lines, or perfectly round and transparent; his aspect is generally vigorous and threatening; by his side crouches a dragon apparently striving to reach the precious stone.

11. Stands with hands folded in prayer before a lotus pedestal bearing a funagoko, the expanded boat-shaped plaque that is placed behind Buddhist divinities.

12. Holding a begging-bowl from which ascends a fountain of water.

13. Holding a Buddhist scepter or *ni-o-i,* a short staff capped with a fish.

14. In prayer before a vase containing a leafless branch of drooping peach.

15. Holds a long knotted staff; by his side is a vase containing peonies.

16. Looking up to heaven; holds a fly-brush or is seated on a mat clasping his knee with both hands.

RISHI OR SENNIN
(The Immortals)

Sennin are beings who by ascetic practices have acquired supernatural power and an extended term of life, and who are exempt from transmigration for one hundred thousand years. They thus enjoy peace and rest in the solitude of the mountains.

They are represented as old white-bearded men of stately mien and kindly expression. They are usually dressed in a scanty coat of leaves which partially covers an undergarment of simple Chinese lines; they carry a knotted, crooked staff.

The Chinese eight immortals are included in the list of *sennin*, but the actual number of these is almost beyond counting. Gama Sennin (*q.v.*), Kanzan, Chorio, Kosekiko, Kioyu, and Sofu, Tobosaku (*q.v.*), and Korei-jin, are among those most frequently met with in art.

The *sennin* spend much of their unlimited time concocting different formulae for an *elixir vitae*, and Okakura Kakuzo credits these untiring chemists with having discovered some of the wonderful pottery glazes. Other writers see in them the forerunners of the European alchemists.

TENNIN
(Buddhist Angels)

A striking similarity exists between the angels of Christian and of Buddhist art; both are probably derived from conceptions that had their origin in Western Asia.

Tennin are represented as beautiful maidens with phoenix wings and graceful draperies who float in the blue of heaven. They are sometimes shown playing on musical instruments of ancient design — suggesting the well-known angels of Fra Angelico.

Part Four

SYMBOLS AND SYMBOLIC OBJECTS

PART IV

SYMBOLS AND SYMBOLIC OBJECTS

From the varied number of the art objects of Japan, it is difficult to select only such as are of direct symbolic import, for the artists and designers have drawn untiringly from the realm of legend and symbolic design for the decorative motives of all objects, whatever their use.

In order to keep within certain bounds, however, an attempt has been made to restrict the choice of objects described in this section to those of ritual or ceremonial use, and to the attributes of the deities. This, of course, necessitates the omission of such familiar and interesting objects as the *inro*, or tiered medicine case; the smoker's quaint outfit; the artist's boxes; the *tsuba*, and other sword furniture, which have been very slightly touched upon in the article on the sword; and, perhaps the most important of all, the *netsuké*.[1] A collection of these last-mentioned exquisitely carved bits of ivory, which were used to prevent the slipping of the pendant purse, *inro*, or tobacco pouch from the sash or belt, would probably show representations of every legend, symbol, and deity mentioned in this book, but the utilitarian character of their use excludes them under the classification adopted.

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1 Albert Brockhaus. *Netsuké. Versuch einer Geschichte der Japanischen Schnitzkunst.*

Marcus Bourne Huish, "The Evolution of a *Netsuké*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society*, VII (1897), pp. 2–16.

Henri L. Joly, *Legend in Japanese Art*, article, "Netsuké."

TAKARA-BUNE
(Ship of Good Fortune)

On the second day of the New Year, the symbol-loving Japanese place under their pillows slips of paper having representations of the *Takara-bune* drawn upon them, with the prayer that this Ship of Good Fortune may come into port on the morrow.[1] They also hope "that a pleasant dream will disclose all the good luck which the New Year has in store for them."

When the voice of the picture-peddler rings through the cold, clear December night, many Japanese youths tremble with excitement in the hope of enjoying a glimpse of their future fortune, and the old feel rejuvenated by the festive sentiment that prevails. It is a night full of romantic imaginings — so dear to the Japanese of all classes.[2]

Accounts of the early form of this Ship of Good Fortune reveal a curious bit of naïve psychology. Dreams were important omens, and the disastrous effect of an unpleasant dream must be done away with. A bad dream was therefore written upon a piece of paper and placed in a small boat, which was then set adrift. As this idea developed, drawings of an attenuated demon, personifying ill luck, were also placed in the boat to be carried away by the waves. With the release from bad luck came a desire for good fortune. A ship which could carry away could also return — perhaps laden with good things. Some of the earliest depictions of the *Takara-bune* show it bearing the rice plant or a bag of rice — an article

[1] It has been suggested that the idea of a ship, bearing treasure, may have originated in the tribute-ships that came laden from Korea; but pictures of ships are also used for ceremonial purposes among the Malays.

[2] Teitaro Suzuki, "The Seven Gods of Bliss," *The Open Court*, XXI (1907), pp. 397–406.

of food so important that it early became a symbol of plenty. Gradually other symbols of wealth or happiness were added, such as the *tai*, the lobster, and the centipede. Finally, the *Takara-mono* — that piling up of good things — and representations of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune were added. But on the sail of the treasure ship, bearing witness to its earliest use, is delineated the old Chinese character which stands for *tapir*, that strange animal which is believed today by the country people in Japan to be a devourer of evil dreams.

The *Takara-bune* carries as passengers the Shiki-fuku-jin, or Seven Household Gods of Fortune. Its cargo consists of the *Takara-mono*, or classic symbols of good fortune, and the *Shippo*, or seven precious things.

TAKARA-MONO
(Emblems of Good Fortune)

The *Takara-mono* (*takara*, a Chinese word meaning "treasures"), a group of miscellaneous objects emblematic of good fortune, probably originated in Japan during the Tokugawa period, that long period of peace (two hundred and fifty years) beginning in the latter part of the sixteenth century, when the doors of the Island Empire were closed to foreign influences. Many of the manners and customs of Old Japan, as depicted in art, arose and were fostered at that time: the tea ceremony, the schools of floral arrangement, and, probably, the adoption of the *Takara-mono*. This set of familiar symbols, nearly all apparently of native origin, are intimately associated with the everyday thoughts of the people, expressing to them health, wealth, comfort, safety, and other things desired. Presented either alone or as the cargo of the *Takara-mono* they are: the *ikari*, or anchor; *kai*, or cowry; *zeni*, or copper coin; the *koban-ni-hako*, or coins in a chest; *fundo*, or

weight; *kanebukuro,* or purse; *kagi,* or key to the treasure-house; *kotsubo,* or jar which contains valuables; *uchiwa,* or fan; *kotoji,* or bridge of the harp; *choji,* or clove; *tsuchi,* or mallet of Daikoku; the *kakuregasa,* or hat of invisibility; the *kakuremino,* or raincoat; the *hagoromo,* or feather robe; the *makimono,* or rolls of manuscript; the *orimono,* or rolls of fabric; the *sangoju,* or precious coral; the *shippō,* or seven precious things; and the *tama,* or sacred gem. The *tachibana,* or orange, is also to be included in this list, and the *kara-shishi* is sometimes given with the *Takara-mono.* The list varies, but the foregoing are usually accepted.

IKARI
(Anchor)

Japan shares the world's interpretation of the anchor as an emblem of safety and of hope.

KAI
(Cowry)

In previous centuries, throughout the East, the *kai,* a species of cowry, was used as money; hence, it signifies wealth.

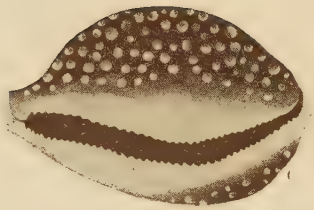
ZENI
(Coin)

The *zeni* is an iron or copper coin of little value. It is symbolic of moderate wealth.

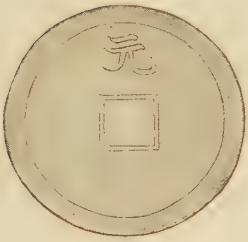
KOBAN-NI-HAKO
(Coins in a Chest)

The *koban* is an ancient Japanese gold coin, worth at least one *riyo.* The *koban-ni-hako,* the depiction of a number of these in a chest, is emblematic of plenty.

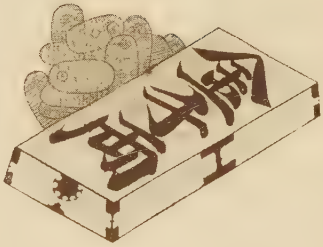
ANCHOR



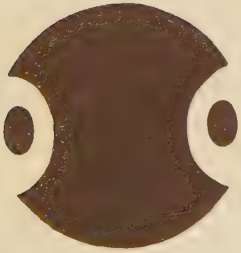
COWRY



COIN



COINS IN A CHEST



WEIGHT

KEY TO THE TREASURE HOUSE

FUNDO
(Weight)

The *fundo* is a weight used by tradesmen. It is symbolic of commerce.

KANEBUKURO
(Purse)

The *kanebukuro*, or inexhaustible purse of money, is symbolic of wealth.

KAGI
(Key to the Go-down)

The inflammable character of the Japanese houses has necessitated the building of fire-proof storehouses or "go-downs."[1] Owing to the custom of displaying but few works of art at one time, these storehouses are often filled, not only with gold, but with priceless art treasures. The *kagi* is, therefore, indicative of wealth.

KOTSUBO
(Jar)

The *kotsubo* is a jar in which money and other valuables are buried. It is usually represented containing the *tama*, or sacred pearl; the *sangoju*, or precious coral; the *koban*, or gold coin; and the *shippō*, or seven precious things. It is emblematic of security. As in the case of the *kagi*, the use of the *kotsubo* is probably due to the inflammable character of Japanese buildings.

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[1] "Go-down" seems to be a Tamil word, which passed first into Malay and was adopted into Asiatic English.

UCHIWA
(Fan)

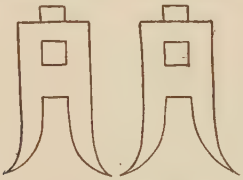
The *uchiwa* is a flat fan of Chinese design used by chieftains, in ancient times, as an emblem of authority; as such it is included in the list of the treasures of the *Takara-mono*, and is an attribute of Fuku-roku-ju, Ju-ro-jin, Benten, and Bishamon. It was in common use until displaced by the folding fan.[1]

KOTOJI
(Harp Bridge)

The *kotoji* is the bridge of the *koto*, or Japanese harp, upon which the strings of the instrument are stretched. It is symbolic of harmony.

CHOJI
(Clove)

The clove is used in Japan as a perfume, and it is also used for purifying the air. The little *chōji-buro* are beautiful in form and design. The spice is placed in water in the upper



Bridges of the Harp

Cloves

part of the burner, and the water is kept boiling by the charcoal underneath. The fumes from the cloves are thus diffused through the room. The *chōji* is considered a safeguard against impure air, and is emblematic of sweetness and of health.

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[1] Charlotte M. Salwey, "On Japanese Fans," *Transactions of the Japan Society, London*, II (1907–1909), pp. 30–73.

PURSE, FAN, AND TREASURE JAR

TSUCHI
(Mallet)

The *tsuchi*, or mallet, of Daikoku (*q.v.*) is called the "Creative Hammer," for it incorporates the Yo and In (Yang and Yin, see page 163), or the male and female principles of Nature, and so lead to the creation of all things. It bears, on the striking portion, the sign of the *tama*, or sacred gem, sometimes of the *tomoe*, or *mitsu-tomoe* (*q.v.*). It is used in the ceremony called Tsuchi-no-In, which consists of symbolic movements of the hammer accompanied by the recitation of a mantra or magic formula. These movements are called *in.*

The *tsuchi* is popularly believed to be filled with gold, and either to produce wealth if diligently wielded, or to bring good fortune to its happy possessor.

KAKUREGASA
(Hat of Invisibility)

The *kakuregasa* has the power of rendering its wearer invisible; it is, therefore, believed to be a protection from danger.

KAKUREMINO
(Rain-Coat of Invisibility)

The rain-coat of the Japanese farmer is made of straw, and with the large straw hat effectually protects the wearer from storm. As a symbol, it signifies protection, for it is believed to render one invisible to evil spirits. It may also symbolize comfort.

HAGOROMO
(Feather Robe)

As a symbol, the robe of feathers worn by the *tennin*, or Buddhist angels, is thoroughly eastern in conception. The

possession of a *hagoromo* by a mortal insures to him perpetual youth and the ability to soar at will through space.

MAKIMONO
(Rolls of Manuscript)

The most ancient books of China and Japan were made in the form of rolls. In Japan, these rolls were called *makimono*, and are emblematic of wisdom. They are represented either rolled up or unrolled, and the significance varies according to the representation. The *makimono* is the attribute of Ju-ro-jin (*q.v.*), the God of Wisdom, and of two of the *rakan*, or disciples, of Buddha.

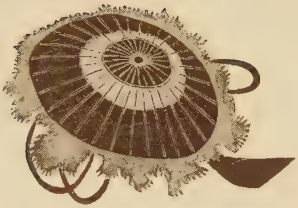
ORIMONO
(Rolls of Fabric)

The *orimono* are rolls of silk fabric, usually of the variety used only by the imperial family and the nobles; hence it has become a symbol of luxury and splendor. A roll of silk is also a favorite gift, and the importance attached to it harks back to the far distant time when the art of weaving was a new achievement of the human race. Among these very early tribes the "first-fruit of the loom" was used not only as an offering to the gods, but was sent from chieftain to chieftain, and later from monarch to monarch, as a tribute or as a propitiatory or ceremonial gift.

SANGOJU
(Coral)

Coral has long been an important symbol both among the Chinese and Japanese. It is believed to represent a tree which grows at the bottom of the sea, called the *chew*, or iron-tree. It symbolizes rarity and perfection. In China, when represented with peacock feathers, it indicates official rank.

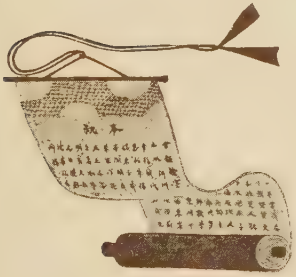
MALLET OF DAIKOKU



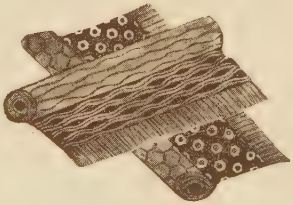
HAT OF INVISIBILITY

RAIN-COAT OF INVISIBILITY

FEATHER ROBE



ROLL OF MANUSCRIPT



ROLLS OF FABRIC

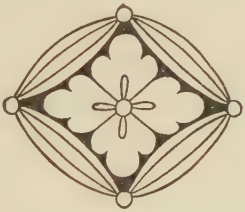
SHIPPO

(Seven Precious Things)

The *shippō*, or seven precious things, are: gold, silver, coral, crystal, agate, and pearl. The list varies, and the older records include amber, tortoise-shell, and mother-of-pearl.

The Japanese term for enamels of all kinds is *shippō;* the word is probably of Chinese origin, and goes back to a

Coral



Shippo (Crest)

Sacred Jewel

time when amber, tortoise-shell, mother-of-pearl, coral, agate, rock-crystal, and lapis lazuli were used as inlays. The *shippō* form is oval, like a flattened grain of rice, or like the small metal cells which, when filled with enamel, form the basis of much of the cloisonné work. This simple form has been varied and developed into beautiful arabesque and diaper designs.

There is far more in this term *shippō* than can be grasped by us, because perhaps this mystic number seven is applied and made use of to express in its summing up what cannot be expressed by any other medium. Seven precious things to them are like the seven precious colors and the seven separate notes of music, by whose means all the glorious art of the world has found expression and interpretation.[1]

The *shippō-no-mon*, literally "enamel-crest," is one of the most familiar of the Japanese crests.

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[1] Charlotte M. Salwey, "Japanese Enamels, Ancient and Modern," *Transactions of the Japan Society*, London, VII (1905–1907), p. 237.

TAMA
(Sacred Jewel)

In our search for the meaning within a symbolic object or a symbolic representation, we find that the deeper the significance the more obscure is the connection between the object or representation and its symbolic meaning. Perhaps the most intangible, yet the most deeply significant symbol in the oriental world is the *tama* (Sanskrit, *mani*), or sacred jewel.

Considered as an object, or perhaps more correctly as a symbolic representation, it is a pear-shaped body with three rings near the top. It is often surmounted by flames, and is consequently referred to as the "flaming jewel" or "flaming pearl," *Hoshi-no-tama.* The *tama* is included in the list of the *Takara-mono,* where a number of *tama* are sometimes drawn piled upon a *dai* or stand. It is used for the exorcism of evil spirits; it is carved upon the topmost point of pagodas and temples, of shrines and gravestones; it is the object — representing, perhaps, the hidden treasures of the world — for which the dragons war, or over which they keep jealous guard; it is the jewel that typifies the force which controls the ebbing and flowing of the tide — "the tide-compelling jewel" — and as such is somewhat confused with the crystal ball, the sacred symbol of the Shinto faith; it is the most important of the Buddhist symbols, and is placed in the hands, and on the brow — "the third eye" — of the Buddha, of Kwannon, of Jizo, and of some of the other Bosatsu, and is given to Fuku-roku-ju, Ju-ro-jin, Hotei, and Daikoku, as the gem of transcendental wisdom; it is also placed in the hands of certain of the famous heroes of story, such as Kamatari, Ojin, and Jingo.

In the life of man the intellect and the spirit are the most intangible, and the *tama* is the symbol of supreme intellect

and of spiritual being — it is the vehicle for the expression of the very essence of the gods and of the soul of man. This esoteric significance may be due to etymological development, as the Sanskrit word *mani* means literally "stainless," or "increasing," or, again, it is a general term for pearls, and then for "a fabulous pearl which is ever bright and luminous."[1] The Japanese word *tama*[2] means, first, "a precious stone," and, later, "the spirit" or "the soul."[3] Lafcadio Hearn, who understood perhaps more than any other European the mysterious workings of the oriental mind, wrote of the *tama:* "It is a mystic gem whose lambent glow (iconographically suggested as a playing flame) is the emblem of *Pure Essence.*"[4]

The *shari* of the Buddhist dead is closely akin to the *tama,* for these tiny gem-like stones, believed to be found in the cremation ashes, also represent the "soul substance" of the departed.

MAGATAMA AND KUDATAMA
(Amulet Jewels)

The *magatama* and the *kudatama* are probably not allied to the *tama* except in name. They are classed by archaeolo-

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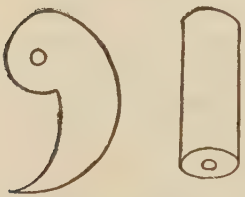
[1] "This ball is commonly called a 'pearl'; some have described it as the sun; and Dr. Hirth (*Chinesische Studien,* pp. 232 ff.) has brought evidence that it is an emblem of thunder." — W. P. Yetts, *Symbolism in Chinese Art,* p. 23.

[2] E. J. Eitel, *Handbook of Chinese Buddhism, Being a Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary,* p. 96.

[3] W. G. Aston develops further the etymological side of this question. *Tama* contains the root of the verb *tabu,* "to give"; *tama-mono* means "a gift thing," and *toshi-tama,* "a New-Year's gift." As a gift usually represents something either of material or sentimental value, so the word *tama* came next to signify something valuable, as a precious jewel, and thus "it is used symbolically for the sacred emanation from the god which dwells in his shrine, and also for that most precious thing, the human life or soul." — *Shinto: The Way of the Gods,* p. 27.

[4] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan,* p. 403.

gists among prehistoric ornaments and amulets. They are found in large numbers in the dolmens and early graves of Japan and Korea, and were evidently used, strung on a cord, as a necklace or cincture; this use survived to a quite recent date in the Lu Chu Islands. They were made of jasper, chalcedony, crystal, and amethyst; more rarely of chrysoprase and nephrite. As the last two minerals are not found in Japan, it is evident that the source of these curious "jewels" must be sought on the continent.



Magatama and Kudatama

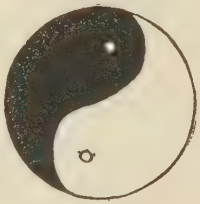
The *kudatama* is a tubular-shaped object, from half an inch to an inch and a half long, which was sometimes strung with the *magatama*. The *magatama* is comma-shaped, and is pierced at the large end. In outline it is identical with the *tomoye* (*q.v.*), and closely resembles the elements of the Chinese *Tae keih* — the Yang and Yin — but as yet no close relationship has been established. It seems impossible, however, that so great a similarity of form should exist without some parity of meaning.

The origin and import of the *magatama* has been a subject of much controversy among European ethnologists, and most abstruse theories have been propounded; but no entirely satisfactory explanation has been evolved. As it resembles the tadpole in shape, the beginnings of life have been suggested and a phallic significance insisted upon; and in view of the common trend of the early mind this theory probably comes very near the truth. A simple, but perhaps too obvious interpretation is that the *magatama* is an imitation of the claws of wild animals which were strung together and worn as amulets. This idea has a distinctly greater value when it is considered

that there is a widely distributed practice of wearing hook-shaped ornaments in the attempt to prevent the escape of the soul from the body.[1]

YO AND IN; YANG AND YIN
(Male and Female Principles)

The basis of Chinese philosophy is expressed in the words: "All things are produced by the action of the male and female principles." In the *Chow Yih* (*Book of Changes*) it is said: "The unfathomableness of the male and female principles (Yang and Yin) is called god." This idea is expressed by the familiar diagram Yo and In, the light portion, Yo, representing the masculine or active and positive element, and the dark portion, In, the feminine or negative and passive. The light half of the diagram often shades into the dark, and the dark into the light, suggesting the merging of the masculine nature into the feminine, the incorporation of one within the other, thus forming a perfect or complete being. It symbolizes, therefore, the Great Ultimate principle or "Source of Existence," or the "Two Regulating Powers," which together create all the phenomena of Nature. Around the Yo and In are usually —



Yo and In

grouped the Pa Kwa or eight trigrams composed of unbroken and broken lines. The former stand essentially for the Yo, and the latter for the In. Hence the three whole lines correspond to the unalloyed or male principle and thus to heaven and

[1] On this subject see J. G. Frazer, *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, p. 30. For example, "A Turik on the Baram River, in Borneo, refused to part with some hook-like stones, because they, as it were, hooked his soul to his body, and so prevented the spiritual portion of him from becoming detached from the material."

creative power; while the three broken ones correspond to the Yin or female principle, and so to terrestrial matter and productiveness. From the Pa Kwa as a starting-point, the imaginative ingenuity of sages evolved an endless series of permutations and combinations of linear figures, which were supposed to provide a clue to the mysteries of Nature.[1]

The symbol is common in China, and forms the design on the Korean flag. It is occasionally used in Japan, usually on the scroll which is held by Ju-ro-jin, the God of Wisdom, and by the Three Sages — Lao Tsŭ, Confucius, and Shaka (Buddha).

TOMOE OR TOMOYE
(Comma-shaped Figures)

The *tomoe*, a single comma-shaped figure; the *futatsu tomoe*, a two-comma-shaped figure; and the *mitsu tomoe*, a three-comma-shaped figure, are among the most familiar of Japanese art motives. They are widely distributed, and of great antiquity, and their origin and significance is a subject of deep interest.

The *tomoe* form is identical with the *magatama* and similar to the elements of the Chinese diagram (Yang and Yin) which represents the masculine and feminine principles in Nature. This resemblance probably attests the original phallic significance of the *tomoe*. Huish says:

> Supposed derivations are almost endless — falling snow, waves dashing against the rock, a *tomoe*, or glove,[2] and the crescent moon upon the sun, have all been suggested. The last, as representing the male and female principles in Nature, has much to recommend it.[3]

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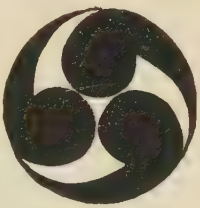
[1] W. P. Yetts, *Symbolism in Chinese Art*, p. 15.

[2] The *tomo* was a shield worn by archers on the left arm; it was made of white deerskin, and in the shape of a comma.

[3] Marcus Bourne Huish, *Japan and Its Art*, p. 174.

The *mitsu tomoe*, with its three "commas," expresses the universal idea of the trinity, and it has a suggestive similarity to the *triscele*, the "three-legged symbol," which is found among the early art remains of Asia Minor, Greece, and Etruria, and among the Celts, and which some scholars believe to be, like the swastika, a solar emblem.[1] By others, various unconvincing reasons are presented for considering the *mitsu tomoe* as the primitive form of the sign for thunder, which, according to the old Chinese, was a spiral, perhaps the rounding of the conventional form of lightning. Raiden, the Japanese god of thunder, with his circle of thunder-producing drums, each decorated with the *mitsu tomoe*, is cited as a confirmation of this theory; but as the symbol also figures conspicuously on Daikoku's mallet, and on the drums and lanterns used in Buddhist and Shinto temples, the evidence is not convincing. It is depicted on the ridge poles and tiles of temples and homes as a protection against fire, which suggests that it may originally have had some relation to water.



Mitsu Tomoe

The *mitsu tomoe* is used as a crest by eight daimyo families, conspicuous among them being the family of Arima.

MANJI
(Swastika)

Of the numerous forms of the cross, the swastika is the most ancient. There are many varied and interesting theories regarding its origin, which is unknown, but the universality of its distribution has been traced, and its significance has been

[1] Goblet d'Alviella, *The Migration of Symbols*, p. 54.

widely speculated upon. It has been found in the implements of stone used by prehistoric man, and in Greece, Babylon, Persia, India, Etruria, China, Japan, Thibet, Switzerland, Scandinavia, as well as in North and South America. It has been associated with the stars, with lightning, and with water; with the Creator of all things; while some writers have ascribed to it a phallic meaning. Such scholars, however, as Percy Gardner, Samuel Beal, Max Muller, and Count Goblet d'Alviella, agree in the theory that the swastika, like the wheel, has been, among all nations, a symbolical representation of the sun or of a solar god,[1] and as such has ever been a symbol of good fortune, the Sanskrit word *swastika* signifying happiness and good luck. There is, however, a variant of the felicitous form, called the *sauwastika*, in which the bars on the arms of the cross turn in the opposite direction, which suggests the reverse movement of the sun, and the reduction of order in the world to chaos.

The symbol was probably introduced into India from Greece or Asia Minor, and came to Japan with Buddhism, where it is regarded as a symbol of Buddha's heart, that is, "of the esoteric doctrines of Buddhism." It was depicted upon the breast of the statues of Buddha, and upon his so-called footprints. It is always drawn upon the banners of the

[1] The Chinese Empress Wu (684–704 A. D.) invented a number of new forms for characters already in existence; such as a swastika in a circle for the sun. This may be found in inscriptions on the stone monuments of that period.

"It was not positively proved that the swastika was a sun symbol until Percy Gardner found a coin of the ancient city of Mesembria, struck with a swastika bearing within its opened center an image of the sun, *Mes-embria*, meaning the city of the 'midday' sun, this name being stamped on some of its coins by the decisive legend M E. Such a discovery makes one of the 'fairy tales of science,' with the perennial enthusiasm that is the true end and highest recreation of all labour."—Sir George Birdwood's Introduction to the English edition of Goblet d'Alviella's *The Migration of Symbols*, p. xi.

Shōryō-bune, the Ship of the Dead, and upon the lid of the coffin. Many of the Buddhist temples, and the principal Buddhist deities, among them Kwannon and Jizo, use the *manji* as their special crest.

Decoratively, it is used on all objects, alone as a mark, as a diaper pattern, or as a border. There are many variants of the common form.[1]

BUTSU-SOKU-SUKI
(Footprints of the Buddha)

Representations of the footprints of a deity or sacred personage have been used symbolically by several of the early peoples. They were considered as a "vestige of presence, a testimonial of passage," suggesting the thought "I have been here."

In India, the footprints of Vishnu, the earlier Brahmanic god, were important emblems; the idea was borrowed by the Buddhists, and the footprints of the great teacher have become one of their most sacred symbols. Representations of this symbol are less frequently met with in Japan than in India, but they are found not only upon stone monuments, but also in religious paintings. The first stone to be carved with the sacred footprints in Japan was copied from a similar monument in China that was said to be an imitation of an Indian original. Concerning this original, the following tradition is given in an old Buddhist book:

In a temple of the province of Makada there is a great stone. The Buddha once trod upon this stone; and the prints of the

[1] The swastika has been variously termed: *fylfot, gammadion, tetrascele,* and, in Japan, *manji.* The literature on this subject is very extensive; the most important book being *The Swastika,* by Thomas Wilson.

soles of his feet remain upon its surface. . . . . When the Buddha felt that the time of his Nirvana was approaching, he went to Kushina (Kushinara), and there stood upon that stone. Then he said to his disciple Anan (Ananda) "In this place I leave the impression of my feet, to remain for a last token. Although a king of this country will try to destroy the impression, it can never be entirely destroyed." And indeed it has not been destroyed even to this day. Once a king, who hated Buddhism, caused the top of the stone to be pared off, so as to remove the impression; but after the surface had been removed, the footprints reappeared upon the stone.[1]

There are, usually, seven emblems on the soles of the feet; they are called *Shichi-so*, or the "Seven Appearances," and include the swastika, the fish, the diamond club (*vagra*), the conch shell, the flower vase, the wheel, and the crown of Brahma. The swastika is sometimes replaced by a flamelet design which probably suggests the traditional luminosity of the footprints.

Gautama Buddha said: "Whosoever beholds the signs upon the soles of my feet shall be purified from all his faults."

THE EIGHT BUDDHIST SYMBOLS

From India and China, with the doctrines of Buddha, come these eight familiar symbols — the lotus,[2] the fish, the knot, the umbrella, the canopy, the jar, the conch, and the wheel of the law.[3] They are found carved in wood, or made in clay and gilded, on the altars of every Chinese Buddhist temple, and they appear as decorative designs on the embroideries and por-

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *In Ghostly Japan*, p. 119.

[2] An account of the lotus is given in the section devoted to plants.

[3] The wheel of the law is sometimes replaced by a drum or bell which is used in the temples and is occasionally beaten to attract the attention of the gods to the prayers of the priests.

celains of China and Japan. They are often drawn entwined with fillets or ribbons which represent the rays or aura of the symbol, in the same manner as the halo of a divinity.

GYO
(The Fish)

The fish[1] is one of the oldest and most universal of symbols. It was an essential article of food among primitive peoples, and as symbolic language developed, it assumed an important place. Probably because of early phallic beliefs, it became a symbol of fertility and of woman. Isis, Venus, Kwannon, and even the Virgin Mary, are sometimes depicted with the fish.

Two Fish

The fish was also sometimes referred to in the early mythologies of Asia and Europe, both as the sun and as the "chariot of the sun."

According to the Babylonian and Hebrew world-conceptions, the waters were divided into the waters above the firmament, and the waters in the deep, under the firmament. The former are the waters of the clouds, the source of rain and occasionally the cause of a deluge; the latter comprise the ocean and the waters below the earth coming forth in the form of springs. The Sun God passes through these waters either as a fish or in his barge.[2]

A Chinese story which has the same elements as the Greek story of Arion, and of the stories of other peoples, is of K'in Kau, a court musician, who loved to live for days at a time

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[1] See also "Carp," and "Tai."

[2] Paul Carus, "The Fish as a Mystic Symbol in China and Japan," *The Open Court,* xxv (1911), p. 401.

in the water. He haunted the rivers and the ocean. One day he disappeared, and was mourned as dead by his friends. A temple was erected on the shores of his favorite river. Two hundred years afterwards, he appeared riding upon a huge red carp.

It will not be difficult to recognize in K'in Kau a fairy-tale representation of the hero of resurrection and of life immortal. He is the solar deity that disappears in the western ocean, and after crossing the waters of the deep where lies the realm of the dead, returns in the east with undiminished vigor. Time does not affect him, and centuries are to him no more than so many hours to a mortal man.[1]

This tale has naturally come to Japan, and Hokusai and other artists have seized upon it.

In China, the fish is also one of the many emblems of happiness; a kind of perch is called *fuh*, and has the same sound as a word meaning "riches."

Fish are believed to swim about in pairs, faithful to each other, and for this reason symbolize marriage. They also suggest the idea of harmony, for they can live only in the water, and are therefore in perfect harmony with the element in which they live. This is expressed by the Chinese phrase, *yu shui hsiang ho*, "the mutual harmony of the fish and the water."

As one of the eight Buddhist symbols, "the fish signifies freedom from all restraints. As in the water a fish moves easily in all directions, so in the Buddha-state the fully emancipated knows no restraints or obstructions."[2]

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[1] Paul Carus "The Fish as a Mystic Symbol in China and Japan," *The Open Court*, XXV (1911), p. 385.

[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *In Ghostly Japan*, p. 125.

NADE-TAKARA-NUSUBI
(The Knot)

The knot, without beginning or end, is a common emblem of longevity; it is often called the knot of destiny. It is probably derived from the mystic sign of Vishnu.

The Knot

It is often drawn with eight twists, which stand for the eight commandments and warnings of Buddha: "Thou shalt not steal"; "Thou shalt not kill"; "Thou shalt not commit lewdness"; "Thou shalt not bear false witness"; "Thou shalt not drink wine"; "Old age"; "Infirmities"; "Death."

KARAKASA
(Umbrella)

Originally the use of the umbrella in eastern countries was utilitarian, due to climatic conditions. It was used, perhaps, more as a protection from the hot rays of the sun than from the rain. Many of the festivities were held in the open air, and in the oldest carvings where religious or state processions are depicted the people of the wealthier classes are shown with umbrellas or canopies held over their heads by attendants. Naturally it soon became associated with wealth and royalty, and was gradually accepted as a symbol of sovereignty and of supremacy. In China, the umbrella is a mark of official standing; it is presented to a mandarin when he leaves his district, as a token of the purity of his administration. It is carried in procession by various officials, whose rank may be ascertained by the color of their umbrellas, but if a king is present no one of lower rank may carry one.

Among Buddhists it signifies the supremacy of Buddha as a "universal power." The single umbrella denoted dominion over one world; the exaggerated system of worlds was denoted by a number of umbrellas — the number increasing from one to four, referring to the four cardinal points of the compass, and from four to eight, the half-points, to an indefinite number. It may, however, have been introduced as a substitute for the overhanging branches of the tree under which Buddha sat when his long meditations ended in "complete enlightenment." In the early statues of him the tree is sometimes shown; in later representations an umbrella was added to the tree, forming a canopy over the head of the deity. In Buddhist buildings there are often tiers of umbrella-like ornaments which taper to a point at the top.[1]

TENGAI

(Canopy)

The canopy, like the umbrella, is placed over the head of the Buddha. It may replace the overhanging branches of the tree under which he attained supreme Buddha-hood, and which are often represented in the early sculptures. Modern artists have elaborated the simplicity of the early form.

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[1] A. H. Longhurst, in a recent article, "The Influence of the Umbrella on Eastern Architecture," *Journal of Indian Art and Industry,* xvi (1913), 1–8, with 13 plates, presents a most interesting theory concerning the importance of the umbrella as a Buddhist symbol and as an art form. He believes the pagoda to be a development of the umbrella. As a protection, or later, perhaps, as a mark of reverence, an umbrella was placed over a *stupa* or any other sacred spot. This idea gradually developed. The umbrella was given permanent form, being made of wood, stone or metal; the number of umbrellas increased, and they were often arranged in tiers, one above the other. From this form the many-roofed pagoda was evolved. See also Arthur Anthony Macdonall, "The Buddhist and Hindu Architecture of India," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* LVII (1909), pp. 316–326.

CANOPY UMBRELLA CONCH JAR

A GROUP OF BUDDHIST SYMBOLS

TSUBO
(The Jar)

The jar or vase-shaped object represents the receptacle which is believed to contain the sacred relics, such as the ashes, bits of bone, etc., of Buddha. It is deeply venerated, and is kept in the important temples and carried with great pomp in religious processions. With it are often seen a number of smaller jars containing the ashes or other relics of saints or priests.

HORA
(Conch)

The *hora* is one of the most important of the eight Buddhist symbols. Anciently, this species of shell was used by chieftains as a trumpet, and it was adopted by the early Buddhists as a symbol of the voice of Buddha and of the preaching of the law. The book *Dai-nichi-kyo* says, "At the sound of the shell, all the heavenly deities are filled with delight, and come to hear the law."

The prominence of the conch in Buddhist legend is evidenced in the following story:

When Buddha was about to return to earth from the god Indra's heaven, the god reflected that, although Buddha had ascended in three steps, his descent ought to be celebrated with special honours. He therefore caused a ladder of gold to extend from the Mountain Meru to Sankāsya. . . . . The steps were alternately of gold, silver, coral, ruby, emerald, and other gems. At the right side of the ladder he created another, also of gold, by which Indra, blowing the conch, descended, accompanied by his own gods; and on the left another ladder of silver, by which Brahmā and the Brahmā gods descended, holding umbrellas over the Buddha. The three flights of steps appeared to the people of the earth like three rainbows. When Buddha commenced his descent all the worlds were illuminated by the light from his body.[1]

In the representations of "the footprints of Buddha," the shell is one of the most conspicuous symbols. It is sometimes drawn in each of the five toes.

The *hora* is one of the attributes of the Yamabushi, a branch of the Shignon sect, a group of soldier monks or traveling priests who founded monasteries in the mountains. They carried a traveling-basket, a sword, a rosary, and a trumpet made of a conch shell.

The Chinese government has at times given to its ambassadors, on their departure to a foreign land, a *hora* to insure them prosperity. It may then express a wish for a prosperous voyage.

HORIN OR RIMBO
(Wheel of the Law)

Sun-worship is one of the earliest forms of religious devotion, and the disk or wheel[2] as a representation of the sun and of the solar system is one of the oldest and most widely distributed symbols.

In the Vedic Hymns of India (1500 B.C.), the wheel, with its spokes of which "none is the last," is a favorite poetic simile, and a symbol of occult power. The Sanskrit word, *chakra-vartta*—*chakra*, meaning "wheel," and *vartagati*, "to turn," "to set in motion"—was explained as meaning, "The king whose wheel (*i.e.*, chariot) rolls over all the world"; and was used when Alexander the Great brought to India the idea of a universal monarch. In later times the title was given to the Buddha as a symbol of his universal dominion, and the wheel became one of his most important emblems. In fact,

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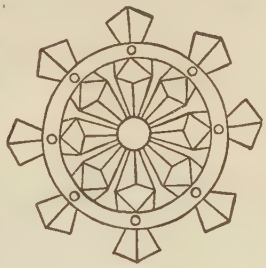
[1] M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 417.
[2] William Simpson, *The Buddhist Praying-Wheel*, p. 87.

in the oldest examples of Indian sculpture, Buddha is not himself represented, but the wheel is placed in his stead. His first sermon, in Deer Park at Benares, is represented by the wheel with two deer; the sermon being regarded as the first turn of the wheel of the sacred doctrines.

The turning of the wheel also represented the idea of transmigration, the passing from birth to birth, and Buddhist priests use at prayer a small brass wheel as they do the *tokko*, with the belief that a perfect or desirable rebirth is thus assured. The comparison of Ingwa (Karma) to the wheel of a wagon is frequently met with in Buddhist literature: "If a man speaks or acts an evil thought, pain follows him as a wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage."



Horin

As a ritual object, as a design, and as a crest the wheel has become familiar in most Buddhistic countries. It is conspicuous among the marks upon the feet of the Buddha. In Japan, it is placed in one of the hands of the many-handed deities — Kwannon, the eight-armed Benten, and especially of Fudō — whose crest it is, and in whose temples it is a frequently repeated decoration. The Yamabushi, the traveling priests of the Shingon sect, wore a metal wheel upon their scarfs. The lotus, the flower of Buddha, is sometimes conventionalized to form a wheel design.

The praying-wheel or prayer-cylinders (*gosho-guruma*) of the Buddhists are of varying forms, and are especially common in Thibet. They are used in Japan by the adherents of the mystic doctrines of the Tengai and Shingon sects. Written prayers and words of praise are placed within the

wheel, each revolution of which is believed to be equal to the repetition of the prayer or hymn. In some instances the use of the wheel differs from this method; the worshiper, believing in *ingwa* (Sanskrit, *karma*, the effect in this life of one's actions in a former existence), and wishing to be cleansed of sins committed, turns the wheel with a prayer to Jizo that his *ingwa* may duly run its course — the course of *ingwa* resembling the perpetual revolutions of a wheel.[1]

KO: DORJE
(Thunderbolt)

Among the religious implements found in the temples in Buddhist countries, there is none that has a more significant history than the *ko*, the Sanskrit word for which is *vajra*,[2] meaning "thunderbolt." The stone axe of prehistoric man was believed by later peoples to be the bolt or shaft or the material substance of the lightning-flash and the cause of its accompanying crash of thunder.

In India, in the earliest times, the gods of Nature — the deities of the sun and moon, of rain and wind, of thunder and lightning — were of the greatest importance. In the Vedic hymns, Indra or Sakka, the God of Thunder, owing to his connection with storm and the crop-producing rain, was deeply venerated: his weapon was a thunderbolt.

Almost all nations have represented lightning by a weapon. Among the Chaldeans it is depicted by a trident as well as by a pitchfork and an axe. The trident, with branches which zigzag like lightning, is frequently exhibited in the hands of the Assyro-Chaldean gods.[3]

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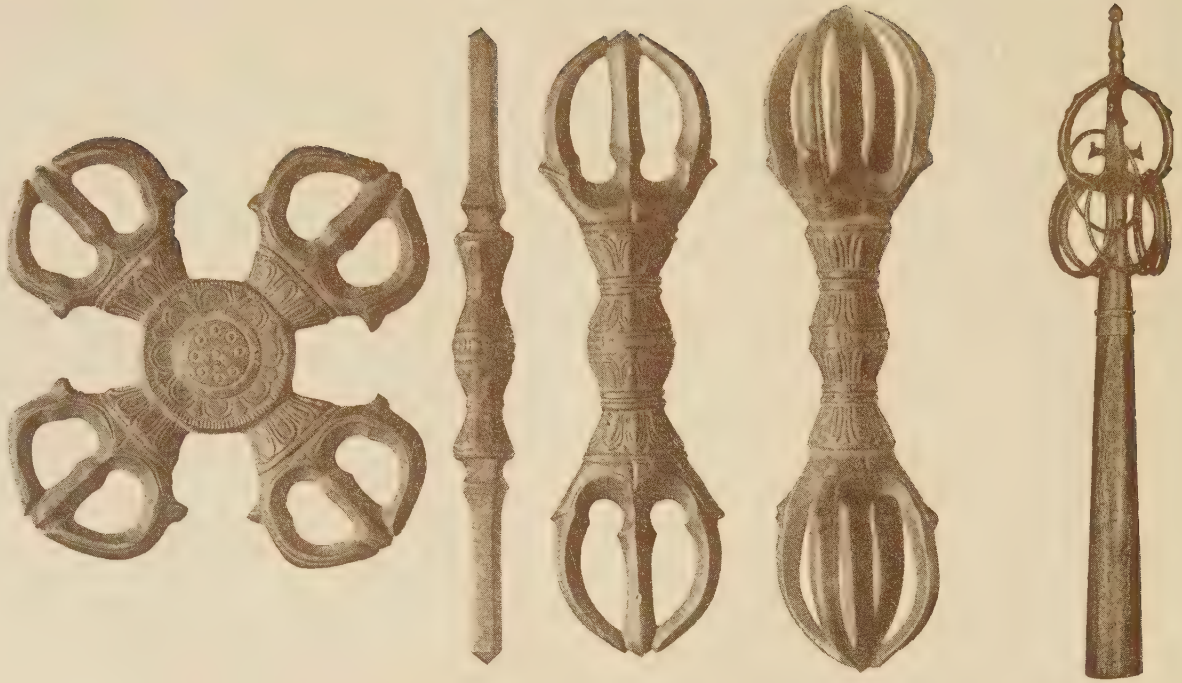
[1] William Simpson, *The Buddhist Praying-Wheel*, p. 16.
[2] A term in common use for the *goko* of the Thibetan word *dorje*.
[3] Albert Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 97.



DIFFERENT FORMS OF KO WITH SHAKUJO

The trident, which came from Asia Minor or Greece, is perhaps the antecedent of the *vajra* or thunderbolt of Indra, which is believed to have fallen from heaven as a "thunderbolt from the gods." Legend tells of a mighty combat between the Buddha and the great Brahmanic gods for the possession of this mystical implement, in which the latter were defeated. The original *vajra* is variously described as a "diamond club," as a "stone with four points," and as a "mighty mass of glowing iron, all fiery, dazzling, and aglow."[1] The ordinary representations of the *vajra* strongly suggest the trident in form. It is a kind of scepter of brass or bronze, usually about six inches long, consisting of a short bar, with one, three, or five prongs at either end, probably representing the flames described in the original instrument.

In Japanese Buddhism, the *ko* is used by the priests in prayer, and during ceremonies of exorcism. It is held between the thumb and forefinger, and is "moved backwards and forwards and from side to side, accompanied by the recitation of prayers and *mantra*, or magic formulae."[2] It has thus the power of driving away evil spirits. The *tokko* — the one-pronged instrument — is used by the priests of inferior rank; the *sanko* — the three-pronged *vajra* — symbolizes the "three manners of being" of the Buddhas; the *goko* — with five prongs — is emblematic of the five supreme Buddhas, and is used only by priests of the highest rank.

The *ko* typifies the destructive power of the deity and is a

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[1] "The original *vajra* is believed to be preserved in the Serra monastery, and has become an object of actual worship. According to M. Huc, countless pilgrims prostrate themselves before it, and at the New Year's festival, on the twenty-seventh day of the first month, it is carried in procession with great pomp to Lhassa. On its way there the mystical implement is adored by the whole population, male and female." — M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 322.

[2] *Ibid.*

symbol of supernatural power and of the supreme potency of prayer, meditation, and incantation. It is the "diamond club" with which the foes of the Buddhist faith are to be crushed, and as such it is placed in the hands of the Ni-ō or temple guardians. It is an attribute of many of the deities of the Buddhist pantheon, and the *vajra* form is used in the handles of swords, the handle of the *drilbu* (Japanese, *rye*) or bell,[1] and in the spokes of the *horin* or wheel of the law. The *Vajra-san*, Diamond Throne or Thunderbolt Seat, was the name applied to the most sacred part of the great temple reared by Asoka on the site of the Bodhi tree, under which Gautama Buddha received enlightenment.

SHAKUJO
(Scepter with Rings)

The *shakujo* is a staff, either long or short, shaped at the top like a *tokko*, to which metal rings are loosely attached. It is carried by Buddhist saints and priests when walking in meditation in the fields. The clanking of the rings gives warning to insects and other creeping things, lest they should be crushed by the feet of the holy one. There is a sect of Buddhist priests, the members of which, in addition to carrying the *shakujo*, wear sandals with only one cross-piece on the sole instead of two, thus making the least possible sacrifice of creeping life.

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[1] "The *vajra* and the *drilbu*, or bell, have a peculiar meaning attached to them by the Buddhists, similar to that attached by Hindus to the Linga and Yoni. The *vajra* represents Buddha, and corresponds to the Linga; the *drilbu* represents Dharma, whose head is figured on its handle, and corresponds to the Yoni." — H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal*, p. 200.

C. F. Koeppen, *Die lamaische Hierarchie und Kirche;* Christian S. Blinkenberg, *The Thunderweapon in Religion and Folklore.*

The *shakujo* is an attribute of Jizo, of Senju Kwannon, and of some of the other Bodhisats and Rakan. It is also carried, in Buddhistic countries, by mendicants.

SHAKU
(Short Staff)

The *shaku* was indispensable to the completion of the full dress of the emperor and of his nobles. It was a short staff, generally held vertically in the right hand. It was made of wood or ivory — the use of ivory being confined to the highest ranks and the most important ceremonies. When not of ivory the white wood of the yew tree was employed.

SA-O
(Staff)

The long staff carried by pilgrims is an attribute of many of the Sennin of the Rakan and of the gods Hotei, Fuku-roku-ju, and Ju-ro-jin. A *makimono*, or book, is often attached to it.

NI-O-I
(Scepter)

The *ni-o-i*, or Chinese *ju-i*, is a short curved wand usually made of jade or of elaborately carved wood. It is of distinctly religious origin, probably Buddhistic, and derives its peculiar form from the sacred fungus. The lotus is sometimes carved on the handle. As an emblem it was originally of phallic meaning, but it is now placed in the hands of deities and priests as a symbol of the power of faith. In Japan, it is chiefly used by the followers of the Zen sect.

The Chinese name *ju-i*[1] means "as you wish," and the *ju-i* is given at marriages, and is exchanged between friends, as an emblem of amity and good-will, expressing also the hope of long life to the recipient. The durable quality of the dried fungus probably accounts for this significance.

FUTSUJIN: HOSSU
(Fly Brush)

The *futsujin* is a brush made of the long white tail of the yak, or the tail of a white horse, fixed to a short handle which is often elaborately ornamented.

When carried by Buddhist priests it is significant of their clerical functions, and is used by them during their hours of meditation. Buddha said: "Let every *bhikchu* have a brush to drive away the mosquitoes." It is written in the sacred books that the *futsujin* is carried by Buddhist priests "to clear away the dust of this world." It is the duty of a priest, when commencing a service, to rid the atmosphere symbolically of all evil influences by passing a *hossu* rapidly through the air, alternately prostrating himself and rising before an image of the Buddha. At an early period in Burmah, gnats or spirits of the air were worshiped by Buddhists; and this practice still survives to a limited degree in Siam and Japan. The *hossu* is therefore made of hair intentionally, in accordance with one of the fundamental rules of Buddhism: "Thou shalt not kill any living thing."

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[1] A full discussion in detail of the views held by various scholars as to the origin and significance of the *ju-i* is given by Berthold Laufer, *Jade*, pp. 335–339. The views expressed here do not accord with the conclusions of Dr. Laufer, but students of oriental art and archaeology are deeply indebted to his scholarship.

SUZU
(Cluster of Bells)

When Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, retired to her cave, and left the world in darkness, Uzumē, the Goddess of Mirth, was chosen by the other deities to dance before the mouth of the cave in order to induce the irate Sun Goddess to come forth. Uzumē attached small bells to a bamboo spray with grass threads, and as she danced she shook the spray; the bells produced a tinkling sound which, fortunately, attracted the attention of Amaterasu. In memory of this event, the Shinto priestesses still carry, in their sacred dance, a bronze instrument with a cluster of bells.

TEMPLE BELLS AND DRUMS

There are several kinds of bells and drums used in the temples of Japan which are tapped as an accompaniment to prayers, and to the chanting of sutras, and which are believed to attract the attention of the deities.

The *ōdaiko* is a drum of decorated parchment, stretched over a round frame, and suspended from a lacquered and gilded upright stand, from two to four feet high. The face of the drum is often ornamented with the *tomoe*, and the stand is surmounted by a flaming *tama*.

The *mokugyo* (the literal meaning of the word is "fish") is a hollow, wooden block, shaped like a fish; sometimes there are two fish with tails interlaced surrounding a ball, or *tama*. Occasionally the *mokugyo* is in the form of a melon.

Another variety of drum resembles the *tam-tam* of India.

The *unpan* or *chanpan* is a flat piece of metal, somewhat like the *ju-i* in shape, which is beaten with a padded stick.

This instrument is sometimes placed in one of the hands of the many-handed deities.

A large bronze clapperless bell is hung in an enclosure in the temple grounds, and is struck with a horizontal bar which is suspended by ropes from the roof of the enclosure.

Within the temples are large bronze bowls which rest upon cushioned stands, and are struck with a padded rod; they are called *Hin*, "The Voice of Heaven."

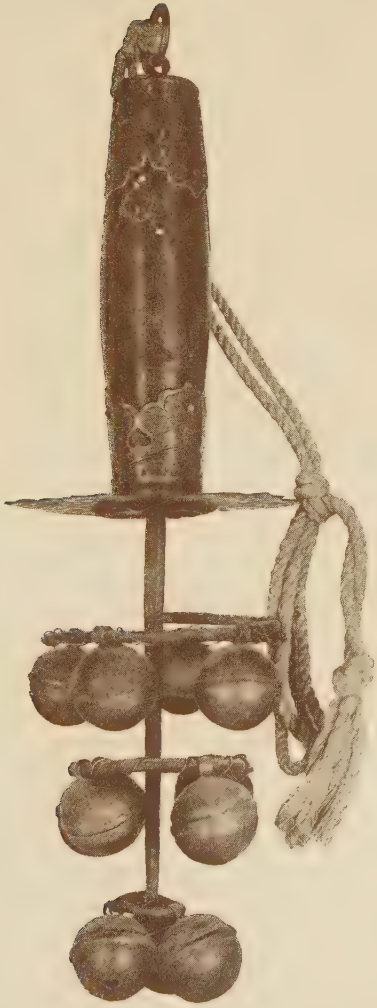
The *rye* (Sanskrit, *drilbu*) is a small bronze bell having half a *tokko* for its handle. It is considered doubly useful, as it is believed to have the power of warding off evil spirits by combining noise with the waving of the mystic symbols in the handle.

WEAPONS

All early peoples, depending upon their various weapons for self-protection, considering them as objects of great value; and their deities were naïvely equipped with the different kinds of weapons in use, as attributes of power and light. From India comes the legend of battles over the fruit of the "wishing tree of Paradise," between Indra and the enemies of the gods. The latter were worsted, for in the depths of the central ocean the gods discovered nine self-created weapons —

the spiked disc, which completely routs the enemy; an axe, which chops the enemy; a sword, which slices the enemy; a bow, which scatters the brains of the enemy; an arrow, which pierces the vitals; a noose, which ensnares the enemy; a spear, which pierces the heart of the enemy; a whirring sling-stone, that produes the *ur-r* sound of the thunder-dragon; a *vajra*, or thunderbolt, which demolishes the enemy.[1]

[1] L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet*, p. 71.



SUZU

In the Japanese pantheon, Fudō and Monju are usually represented with swords; the Ni-ō, with clubs; the eight-armed Benten, with bow and arrows; Bishamon, with a spear; and in several of the hands of the many-handed Kwannon various weapons are placed.

KATANA
(Sword)

In Japanese history and story, the sword has an important place; it is treated and spoken of almost as if it were alive. All famous swords have names, and are the dearest possessions of their owners; they have come to be inseparably connected with the soul of the samurai.

Japan perfected the art of forging swords, and the country acquired such names as "The Kingdom Ruled by a Slender Sword" and "The Land of Many Blades."

The sword is used both as a Shinto and Buddhist symbol. In Shinto shrines, it is one of the three sacred relics — the mirror, the crystal ball, and the sword. According to Shinto legend it was originally discovered in one of the tails of the eight-headed serpent which the wily Susa-no-o, brother of the Sun Goddess, slew, thus delivering the fair maiden, Kushinada. This sword is believed to be preserved, and is one of the most revered objects in Japan.

The *Ama-kurikara*, or "praying-for-rain sword," is held by priests when rain is desired. The name of the sword is derived from an abbreviated form of *Amaryō-no-Kurikara-Ryo — Amaryō*, meaning "rain-dragon," and *Kurikara-Ryo*, "dragon entwining a sword." The name of this dragon is sometimes engraved on sword blades, as on the famous weapon of Kobo-daishi, and the *Ama-kurikara* is often placed in the hands of the God Fudō.

Soldiers wore in their helmets, as a crest of honor, a small two-edged sword of silver, made in the likeness of the sword of Ojin (Hachiman), the hero who is worshiped throughout Japan as the god of war. Tablets bearing carvings or paintings of this two-edged sword were also hung up by victorious soldiers on their return from battle.

A sword is placed in the hands of many of the Buddhist deities. Monju, the God of supernatural Wisdom, wields, in his right hand, the sword of knowledge, whose shining blade dissipates the clouds of mental darkness and dispels the blackness of ignorance.

The appurtenances of the Japanese sword are important objects of art, and form the basis of many famous collections. The *tsuba*, or swordguards, were decorated by great artists, the designs being freely drawn from history, legend, and symbol. The *tsuba*—

is a flat piece of metal, usually circular or slightly elliptical in form; but other styles such as diamonds, squares, octagons, and irregular shapes, decided by the exigencies of the design, are not uncommon. In size they vary from three or four inches in diameter, according to the size of the sword, and weigh from two to three ounces. The *tsuba* usually contains three openings, the central one wedge-shaped, through which the tang of the blade passes, and the other two smaller openings, one on each side, to allow for the passage of the *kosuka* and *kogai* (small knives) to their sheaths in the sides of the scabbard. The earliest guards were made entirely of iron, and in many later *tsuba* this still forms the basis. But bronze in its various forms was also much used as a ground for ornamentation. . . . . In the latest periods other substances, such as bone, ivory, tortoise-shell, wood, leather, and papier-mâché, the last three being coated with lacquer, were sometimes used. . . . . It is doubtful when the *tsuba* first began to be an object of art, no specimens of an earlier date than the fourteenth century existing even in repre-

sentations. Most of the *tsuba* on the older swords are much more modern than the blades to which they are attached. In the olden times, when the samurai fell into evil days he sometimes stripped off and sold the rich embellishments of his sword, retaining only the blade.[1]

YOKI
(Axe)

The axe is represented both as an object and as a symbol. It is often placed in one of the hands of the many-handed deities as a weapon of defense, or as an instrument for sacrificial purposes. Symbolically it is derived from China and takes the form of a conventionalized design. It was formerly embroidered as a border on the lower part of the emperor's robes; in all probability it was first used upon his sacrificial robes, and only later became an essential form of decoration.

SNARE OR ROPE

The coil of rope is of Brahmanic origin; it was an attribute of Siva, Varuna, and Lakshimi, emblematic of the marine girdle of the earth. In Japan, it has apparently lost this significance, and is placed in one of the hands of the many-handed deities, and is given to Fudō, the God of Punishment, for the purpose of binding the wicked.

JUI-DZU
(Rosaries)

The use of the rosary is universal among the religious sects of the Orient; among the Buddhists, it has been in use

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1 Stewart Dick, *Arts and Crafts of Old Japan*, pp. 89–92. See also Ethel Watts Mumford, "The Japanese Book of the Ancient Sword," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, XXVI (1905), pp. 334–410.

for many centuries. The original number of beads was one hundred and eight — corresponding with the number of sins of the flesh — and this number was probably determined by the council of Asoka, two hundred and fifty years before Christ.

Different materials are used in Buddhist rosaries. Formerly they were made of the wood of the Bodhi tree — under which Gautama sat meditating when supreme enlightenment came upon him, but now the wood of the cherry or plum tree, crystal, ivory, or jade is used, according to the desire of the individual. The black seeds of the hiian tree were also employed, as it was thought that their strong odor frightened away evil spirits.

The rosary is carried by the priests and laity of all Buddhist sects; the *sho-zoku-ju* is used by all, but each sect has a rosary peculiar to itself.[1] The rosary is used to aid in the repetition of prayer formulae and mystical sentences, "for without these aids to devotion the long rounds of repetition could not be accurately completed."

KAGAMI
(Metal Mirror)

The mysteriously suggestive quality of shadow and of reflection has always made a strong appeal to the mind of man. Among the Egyptians, Etruscans, Greeks, and Celts, the metal mirror was of great importance, and has been found in large numbers, and of exquisite workmanship, in the burial places of these various peoples. In the Orient, also, the mirror was of deep significance, and much fabulous lore has

[1] J. M. James, "Descriptive Notes on the Rosaries (*Jui-Dzu*) as Used by the Different Sects of Buddhists in Japan," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, IX (1881), p. 173.

grown up around it. The concave bronze mirror, used to kindle the sacred solar fire, is mentioned in the earliest Chinese records, and it became one of the most conspicuous symbols of the Taoists. "The Taoists herbalist fancies that he distils drops of dew from the full moon upon the face of a plane circular mirror which he ties at nightfall to a tree for the purpose."[1] The Taoist priests also wore a mirror upon their backs to ward off evil spirits. The temple hangings, both of India and China, are often heavily jeweled with tiny mirrors — the belief being that when evil recognizes itself it destroys itself. Hence, moreover, as evil spirits were thought to cause pestilence and disease, mirrors were employed to counteract their influence, and also were placed upon the breast of the dead, for the same reason. Powdered mirror was included in the Chinese list of drugs, and careful directions were given for its use. Even today a Chinese woman in the perils of childbirth holds a mirror in her hand.

Obviously, the primary use of a mirror is for toilet purposes; but to see yourself in a mirror is to know something about what you have to face the world with. Accordingly, the Chinese and Japanese make this use of a mirror significant as a part of their fulfillment of the Confucian idea of decorum. They develop the idea further: to know what you face the world with is, in a measure, to know your soul; and to know that is a step toward the toilet of the soul — toward schooling your inner self. . . . . Sometimes a mirror was made to detect the true nature of man. Such were invaluable to kings. And always mirrors were believed to penetrate disguises. No thing of evil could hope to so disguise itself as to pass in a mirror for anything but what it really was.[2]

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[1] S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art*, p. 98.

[2] Kakuzo Okakura, "Chinese and Japanese Mirrors," *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin*, Boston, VI (1908), No. 32, pp. 10–14.

The accusing mirror of hell — *Tabarai-no-kagami* — is shown in Japanese paintings of the world of the dead. It is believed to be an aid to Emma-ō, judge of souls, for it reflects to every spirit the misdeeds of its life in the body. Lafcadio Hearn describes a *kakemono* in the Temple of Zoto-kuin:

> On the left, in the foreground below the throne, stands the wondrous mirror, reflecting the state of souls and the happenings of the world. A landscape now shadows its surface — a landscape of cliffs and sand and sea, with ships in the offing. Upon the sand a dead man is lying, slain by a sword-slash; the murderer is running away. Before this mirror a terrified soul stands, in the grasp of a demon, who compels him to look, and to recognize in the murderer's features his own face.[1]

The mirror was also believed to penetrate and reveal the secrets of the future.

The so-called "magic mirror" has been known to the Chinese for many centuries. It is a round metal mirror which has the curious property of reflecting, more or less distinctly, from its face, when held in the rays of a strong light, upon a smooth, plain surface, the raised decoration on its back, or, more rarely, an image of the Buddha or some other figure which is *not* visible on its back. These mirrors are of great interest and have been closely investigated by European physicists.

The investigators Brewster, Ayrton, and Perry, Gove, and Bertin, all agree in their explanation of the phenomena. They prove conclusively that the peculiar property of the magic mirror is due to the polishing, and is an accident, although it can easily be produced artificially. It results from wavy irregularities of the reflecting surface produced in polishing, in consequence of

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 54.

SHINTO MIRROR SHOWING DESIGN ON BACK

uneven pressure from the back, and is entirely independent of chemical composition.[1]

Other investigators contend that the reflection is produced by a difference in the curvature of the seemingly flat reflecting surface. These theories do not fully account, however, for the reflection, in some mirrors, of an image of the Buddha which is not stamped or chiseled on the back. It is probable, in the first place, that, though the first magic mirror may have been accidental, those made later, and so highly prized, were not, else why the additional image for reflection? The theory of molecular disturbance by uneven pressure on the back, rendering the reflecting surface irregular, is of value in accounting for the possibility of producing this extra reflection. For in the process of manufacture an image of the Buddha may first be stamped upon the back, and then, in the finishing, the design chosen for the back may be stamped, thus causing both to affect the reflecting surface. Much may be said of this most interesting object, but the subject is too intricate for further discussion here.[2]

The mirror has come to Japan retaining its Chinese form and beauty of workmanship, but, because of its association with the myth of the Sun Goddess, the beauty of its symbolism has developed. The round mirror kept in the temple at Isé is said to be the actual one that was made to entice the irate goddess from her cave. It is one of the most sacred objects of the Shinto faith, and the *mikagami,* or sacred mirror of the Shinto temples, is made in its likeness. It is felt to be a

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[1] S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art,* p. 98.

[2] For the literature on this subject see: Friedrich von Wenckstern, *A Bibliography of the Japanese Empire,* especially Vol. I, p. 162; and Frederick Hirth, "Chinese Metallic Mirrors," *Boas Anniversary Volume,* pp. 208–256.

concrete token of her presence, and is "worshiped as if it were herself." The Sun Goddess presented to her grandson, the first mythical ruler of Japan, three objects which are yet included in the regalia of the Japanese emperor: the sword, the mirror, and the crystal ball.

Formerly, a sword was buried with a man, a mirror with a woman, for the mirror is a symbol of a woman's soul. Upon the backs of some of the oldest bronze mirrors is engraved the Chinese character for "soul." "A mirror is a weird thing having a soul of its own, and the soul of the mirror is feminine."[1] A ghostly sympathy is said to exist between a mirror and the soul of its possessor,[2] and there is a Japanese proverb that says: "When the mirror is dim the soul is unclean."

In the dimness and quiet of the Shinto shrines, the mirror, on a metal or wooden stand, is one of the few objects of worship. It is also used in Buddhist temples — "Symbolizing what? Illusion? or that the universe exists for us solely as the reflection of our own souls? or the old Chinese teaching that we must seek the Buddha only in our own hearts?"[3]

KORO
(Incense Burner)

Throughout the East, wherever Buddhism holds sway, there is incense; in the home, in the temple, and in the loneliest wayside shrine it smoulders and sends upward its perfumed smoke. It was introduced into Japan from Korea in 551 A.D., when a collection of sutras, an image of Buddha, and a complete set of temple implements were brought to the Island

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[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *The Romance of the Milky Way*, p. 133.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[3] Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, p. 24.

Empire. It has never found its way into the simplicities and severities of a Shinto shrine, but otherwise its use is universal.

There are as many kinds of incense and of incense burners as there are uses for it. One list gives a hundred different varieties. Recipes for incense-making are preserved and handed down in royal families from generation to generation. Sandalwood, musk, aloes, and cloves are among the ingredients used, and directions are given for making it to imitate the "perfume of the lotus," the "smell of the summer breeze," and the "odor of the autumn wind." Such names as "Blossom Flowering," "Smoke of Fuji," and "Flower of the Pure Law" are given to the different kinds of incense.

Japanese literature is replete with directions for the religious use of incense. It is the Messenger of Earnest Desire, and carries the prayers of the devotees to the presence of deity. As a burnt offering it symbolizes the pious desires of the faithful and the purifying effect of pure flame. The life of man is sometimes compared with the burning of incense; "and the changing of the incense into cold ashes when the flame expires is an emblem of the changing of our bodies into ashes when our funeral pyres have burned themselves out."[1] Incense is still burned in the presence of the dead. It is believed that its perfume shields the body and the newly departed soul from evil spirits. It is also believed that the ghosts of departed loved ones may sometimes be seen in the ascending smoke: this is called *Hangonkō*, and is the subject of a play and of many poems.

The use of incense in Japan is not wholly confined to religious rites and ceremonies; it is also employed largely

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *In Ghostly Japan*, p. 28.

in social entertainments. During the peaceful times of the Tokugawa rule, incense parties were much in vogue and were even more elaborate and interesting than the tea ceremonies. The implements of the game were costly works of art. The elaborate old sets consisted of the incense-burner's desk; the writing-box; paper box; tablet box; the various stands, or *dai*, which were of gold lacquer; the pincers of gold; and the burner itself, of precious bronze or porcelain designed by some famous artist. Boxes, if at all pretentious, might have inner boxes for holding incense appropriate to each season of the year. The workmanship of these inner boxes was exquisite, and they were sometimes decorated with the family crest. The game was carried on with attention to the most minute detail; the contest depending entirely upon the ability of the guests to remember and name, by the sense of smell alone, the different kinds of incense used.

LAMPS AND LANTERNS

A half-fearful, half-tender regard, intermingled with religious beliefs, impelled the ancients to expend much time and thought upon the needs and desires of the spirits of their dead. Curious and beautiful customs have thus arisen. By many peoples the need was felt of lighting the dark abodes of the loved ones who had gone before, and lamps and lanterns of rarest workmanship have been found in tombs and graveyards throughout the world.

In Japan, among the Buddhists, there is a belief that the spirits linger for a period of years near the spot that had once been home; and, as the darkness of the night is a particularly trying time for them, the surviving family and friends erect *ishi-dōrō*, stone lanterns, and faithfully keep them lighted.

In and around the temple grounds these stone lanterns are almost without number.

When a Buddhist dies, the spirit is immediately given a *kaimyō*, or spirit-name; this is engraved upon the *ihai*, or mortuary-tablet, which is placed in the temple and on the household shrine. The spirit-name is also carved upon the stone lanterns, and the lanterns are then presented to the temple as a memorial to the dead. These lanterns are usually made in the form of a *go-rin*, or five-sectioned tombstone, each section representing one of the five elements of which it is believed man is made and to which he returns.

One of the most beautiful festivals in Japan is the Bon-odori or All Souls' Festival, or, as it is more popularly called, the Festival of the Dead, or the Festival of Lanterns. It is held from the thirteenth to the fifteenth of July, during which time the spirits of the dead are believed to revisit the scenes of their life on earth. Each evening at dusk the graveyards are festooned with lanterns, which are lighted as a devotional act by the relatives of the dead. At midnight of the third day, *Shōryō-bune* (boats of straw or bamboo, from two to five feet long) are made and laden with food offerings wrapped in lotus leaves; lighted lanterns are hung upon the ropes and masts. These boats are then set adrift upon the nearest body of water, for it is believed that the spirits will return upon them to the other world.[1]

Nagashi-dōrō are small lamps, made in the shape of ducks, which also are lighted and set afloat for the souls of those who have been drowned.

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[1] H. Schultze, "Japanische Laternen," *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, XIII (1911), pp. 41–59, with 15 plates; Laura B. Starr, "By the Light of a Japanese Lantern," *The Cosmopolitan*, XVII (1894), pp. 737–744; H. Weipert, "Das Bon-Fest," *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft*, VIII (1900), pp. 145–173.

Kiriko-dōrō are paper lanterns of Chinese make, usually decorated with the lotus and with long strips of paper which suggest the *gohei*. They are hung before the *skōryō-dana*, or altar on which the tablets of the dead are placed.

There are, indeed, many varieties of lamps and lanterns in the temples, homes, and shops of Japan, each festival having its special kind.

Before Buddhist shrines, a hanging lamp of unusual form is used. Three brass saucers, each a little smaller than the other, are set one within the other and suspended between two curved brass supports. The oil and a float wick — which is kept in place by a small piece of brass in the form of a stork, lotus, or other familiar form — are placed in the top saucer, and as the drippings pass to the other two, cleanliness is assured. The purest vegetable oil and a vegetable wick, usually of palm-fiber, are used. These lamps are often very beautiful in workmanship and design.

Among the old Shinto families, especially in the interior, where ancient and significant customs are still maintained, the *tomyo*, or lamps of the gods and of the ancestors, are lighted each day at nightfall. Orthodox regulations require that the lamp should be filled only with vegetable oil, and the light kindled with purest natural fire.

The *andon* is a paper-covered lantern which was used in the home. It burned dimly throughout the night, for no Japanese would think of sleeping without having a burning lamp or lantern in the house.

There are many varieties of *chōchin*, the collapsible paper-lantern which is suspended on a pole and carried over the shoulder. The name or crest of the owner is painted in red or black on the outside of these lanterns, giving them a most decorative appearance. An old legend tells of goblin foxes

that, in the darkness of the night, terrorized travelers by extinguishing the lights in these lanterns and eating the candles!

Other lanterns are: the *gandō-chōchin*, corresponding to the "bull's eye," used by burglars and officers of the law; the *kage-dōrō*, shadow-picture lanterns which are exchanged as gifts; the *mando*, or "ten thousand lanterns," a cluster of one large and several small lanterns suspended on a pole and carried to the temples in religious processions by the children.

SAKASUKI
(Libation Cup)

Seventeen hundred years before Christ, there developed in China a ritualistic cult of ancestor-worship, in which offerings of wine, meat, and fruit were made to the spirits of the dead. For this purpose bronze vessels of various shapes were required. A conventional form of the libation cup was like an inverted helmet, having three curved legs. This cup held the fragrant wine which was used during the ceremonies. Cups made in this form are in use today in China as bridal wine cups; in Japan, the shape has survived, but the cups are used only as incense burners.

BUTSU-GU OR HANA-SARA
(Offering Cup)

Before the *ihai*, or ancestral tablets, in every Buddhist household is placed a small cup. The first religious duty in the morning is to make tea with the first hot water of the day, and pour it into this cup as an offering to the spirits of the dead. These cups are of several forms, either plain or sug-

gestive of the corolla of a flower. They are often made of brass.

WATER FLASK

The water flask, or Indian *lota*, is found in one of the hands of the statues of Miroku (Maitreya), and is also one of the attributes of the many-handed Kwannon. It is included in the lists of the early Indian ritual vessels. It was first used for ritual bathing, and, in later Buddhistic times, to contain the perfumed water used to sprinkle the Bodhi tree. It has come to Japan, not as an object of usefulness, but as a pictorial survival, appearing merely as an attribute of some of the deities of Indian origin.

TEPPATSU
(Alms-Bowl)

In the older representations of the Buddha, the alms-bowl probably replaced the sacrificial basin of the older deities and priests, but it was later given to him as a symbol of renunciation of worldly wealth. When he had attained supreme wisdom —

the first food offered him after his temptation was by two merchants, and consisted of honey and wheat. But Gautama reflecting that he must have an alms-bowl, the four Maha-rajas or Guardians of the World each brought one of gold, which he refused; then they brought silver, emerald, and ruby dishes, which were also refused; lastly, each brought an earthenware bowl, and Buddha, causing them to unite in one lest there should be jealousy, accepted the one from all.[1]

Legend says that this bowl is now preserved in Sangara's — the Naga or Snake King's — Palace of Pearls, which lies at

[1] Albert Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 146.

the bottom of the sea, and that when Miroku (Maitreya) — the Buddha who is to come — appears, the alms-bowl will again divide into the original four, each of which will be guarded and preserved; for with the disappearance of the alms-bowl it is believed the religion of Buddha will perish.

Occasionally, a snake is represented as emerging from the bowl. This is a common representation in old Indian reliefs. It recalls the legend of the conversion, by Buddha, of Kasyapa and his disciples, Brahman ascetics and fire-worshipers. Buddha once asked their permission to dwell in the fire temple. The request was granted, but he was warned that a mighty snake lived in the temple. Buddha caught the snake in his alms-bowl and, sending forth flames of fire, left the temple unharmed.

The alms-bowl is sometimes depicted in the hands of Buddha, and is sometimes given to some of his disciples and priests. It is also placed in one of the hands of the many-handed Kwannon. In Buddhistic countries it is carried by mendicant priests.

O MIKI DOKKURI
(Saké Vessels)

Before every Shinto shrine there are placed two vases for the flowers of the sacred *sakaki* plant, and two jars for *saké*. These jars have a most curious appearance because of their peculiar stoppers, which are made of brass or strips of fine wood bent into the required form. The form varies somewhat, but generally it suggests a highly conventionalized *tama* with flames. This form may have originated in the desire to express the pure quality of the wine offering, and the purity of the heart of the one making the offering.

SAMBO
(Stand)

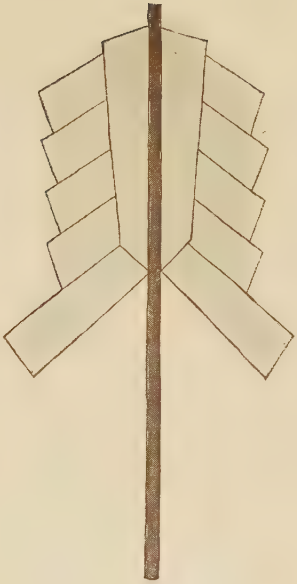
The *sambo* is a curiously shaped little stand on which offerings to the Shinto gods are placed. It is similar to the *dai* of the Buddhist shrines, and is used both in the temple and home. Usually, it is made of brass or lacquered wood.

SHIME-NAWA
(Straw Rope)

In the Shinto legend of the Sun Goddess, reference is made to the straw rope which the anxious gods held before the mouth of the cavern, thus preventing the return of the irate goddess to the cave from which they had enticed her. In memory of this event the *shime-nawa* is to be seen everywhere: on temple gateways, in festoons around shrines, along the fronts of houses, and over doorways. This is especially the case during the New Year's festival, when a street has the appearance of having a continuous *shime-nawa* extending from one end to the other.

The rope is carefully made of rice straw twisted from right to left. Pendants of straw hang down in tufts from the rope at regular intervals; each tuft must have a prescribed number of straws — the first, three; the second, five; and so on for the whole length of the rope. The odd numbers are chosen because they are considered lucky — being associated with the male or active principle of Nature. During the New Year's festival, the *shime-nawa* may also have attached to it a crayfish, a kind of fern, a leaf or two of *yuzuri*, a strip of seaweed, and the *gohei*, or strips of white paper. Each of these objects is of symbolic import. Sometimes, *shime-nawa* are permanent in form, being made of bronze and hung from the *torii*.

SAKÉ VESSEL



GOHEI

STRAW ROPE

A GROUP OF SHINTO SYMBOLS

It is believed that the straw rope will protect from all evil the object around or before which it is placed. It is a common custom to suspend *shime-nawa* across a public highway to protect a community from infectious diseases.

In Kinomoto, on the east coast of Japan, beneath a high cliff, the body of Izanagi is believed to lie buried. In February and October, a *shime-nawa* is attached from the summit of the cliff to a pine tree below.

GOHEI

(Ritual Object)

The *gohei* is one of the most conspicuous of the Shinto objects of symbolic import. It consists, ordinarily, of strips of paper — usually white, though sometimes colored and sometimes edged with gold — which are attached either to a rod or to the *shime-nawa*, or straw rope. At times it is made in more permanent form, of thin brass or copper strips, and is thus used in the temples.

The *gohei* is entirely of native origin, and may, perhaps, be traced to the *inao* and *nusa*, which are important in the religious practices of the Ainu, the aboriginal inhabitants of Japan. The *inao* (*nusa*, "a group of *inao*") is a wand of willow, lilac, or other wood which has been whittled at the upper end, the overhanging shavings forming a bunch which in appearance suggests the *gohei*. *Inao* are still in use among the Ainu for religious and ceremonial purposes. They are set up before dwellings, especially when a new hut is erected; they are placed near springs so that the water may not become pestilential; they are placed in the room with the dead; they are used at "bear feasts" and other functions; they are placed on the seashore where the fishermen push off their boats, for the purpose of pleasing the gods of the sea; and small

inao are hung on the quiver so that the arrows in their flight may have good luck. It is believed that "not only will the gods cease blessing any Ainu who neglects to set up his *inao*, but his own tribe and people will cast him out."[1]

It is possible that the significance of the *inao* and the *gohei* is identical. *Gohei* means "august presence." Originally, the objects were used to attract the attention of the gods during worship, but by the gradual evolution of an idea they came to be regarded as the seat of the gods and, finally, to contain the actual presence of the deity.

The *gohei* are believed to dispel evil influences; they are symbolic of purity, and are used in the purification ceremonies, when they are held over or laid upon the person to be absolved from ritual uncleanness. They are also displayed on all special occasions: on the wedding-day; at the ceremony of forging a sword; and at all festivals, particularly during the New Year festivities, when they are not only set up in their usual form, but are also attached to the *shime-nawa*, or straw rope.

DOHAN
(Banners)

The banners commonly seen in Buddhist temples are used in religious processions. As flags and banners are carried into battle to give the enemy an impression of victory, so are these sacred banners used by Buddhist priests to fill evil spirits with awe and thus subdue them.

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[1] John Batchelor, *The Ainu and Their Folk-Lore*, p. 192; W. G. Aston, "The Japanese *Gohei* and the Ainu *Inao*," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XXXI (1901), pp. 131–135; cf. *Man*, II (1902), p. 153; B. H. Chamberlain, "Notes on the Japanese *Gohei*, or Paper Offerings to the Shinto Gods," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XVIII (1889), pp. 27–29.

KEMAN
(Temple Ornaments)

The reticulated brass or bronze temple ornaments often show beautiful workmanship and design. They are similar to the head-dresses worn by Thibetan women, and were used in Buddhist temples to hang over the heads of the deities.

FIRE-DRILL

In the great Shinto shrines at Isé and Idzume, carefully wrapped in soft white cloths, and placed on bronze stands, are the ancient fire-drills which are used for producing the sacred fire for the temples. Anthropologists refer the invention of the fire-drill — the use of which is quite universal among the uncivilized races of mankind — to a remote antiquity, and Japanese legend says that the implement was presented by the gods to man.

The fire-drill consists of two parts: the first, a thick piece of hard kinoké wood, about two and a half feet long, with a line of holes drilled so close to the upper edge that each hole breaks through the side of the plank; the second, the stick that produces the fire made of a lighter kind of white wood; it is about two feet long and about as thick as an ordinary chop-stick. Fire is produced by fixing the stick in one of the holes and rapidly rubbing it between the palms of the hands.

Each year the temples receive new fire-drills, and, formerly, the presentation was the occasion of an important festival. Fire-drills are all made in Kumano, where the original instrument, direct from the hands of the younger brother of the Sun Goddess, is believed to be enshrined. The traditional

regulations as to the manner of making them have been preserved from time immemorial.[1]

IHAI
(Ancestral Tablet)

The *ihai*, or tablet to the dead, is placed in the household shrine both of Buddhists and Shintoists. As the tablets accumulate with the passing years, some families preserve great numbers of them. For each Buddhist dead, two are made, one for the home and one for the temple. Before the *ihai*, every morning, a cup of tea, some boiled rice, and fresh fruit are placed; incense is burned; and, at nightfall, a lamp is lighted.

The *ihai* is about twelve inches high and, for the poorer classes, is made of plain wood with the *kaimyo*, or spirit-name, written in black, or the name is written on a slip of paper and then pasted upon the tablet. The more costly ones are richly lacquered in black with the name in gold. For a man, the *ihai* is larger than for a woman; and for a child it is very small. A man's *ihai* is highly decorated, often having a top decorated with a flaming *tama*, and it usually has a pedestal in the form of a lotus flower; but the tablet erected for a woman is always plain.

An old and beautiful custom still exists in some parts of Japan. When a husband or wife dies, the one who is left, resolving never to marry again, erects two tablets. On one of these is inscribed, in gold, the *kaimyo* of the dead, and on the other the *kaimyo* of the living is written. On the latter, the first letter is inscribed in red, and the rest of the name in gold; the red ideograph being a solemn pledge of constancy. A widow even loses her living name, and is thereafter addressed

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[1] E. W. Satow, "The Use of the Fire-Drill in Japan," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, VI (1878), pp. 223–226.

by her spirit-name among her friends and relatives. The two tablets — the one for the dead and the other for the living — are placed side by side in the household shrine, and often two larger ones are erected in the neighboring temple. No cup of tea or other offering is placed before the *ihai* of the living until they too have passed into the Great Unknown.

SHARI-TO
(Relic Holder)

The *shari-to* is a small relic case, of many different sizes and shapes, made either of transparent rock-crystal or gold lacquer with glass or crystal sides, to contain the *shari* of the dead.

Buddhists believe that when the body of a holy person is cremated a shining substance like a gem, or more often a pebble, remains in the ashes. This is called a *shari*, and is believed to be a visible manifestation of the soul. The little cases made to contain this soul-substance are of various forms and are divided into several compartments; two or three *shari* are placed in each compartment. "The superstitious believe that if the man has been wise there will be many such lumps found when his body is burned; if not, there will be but few."[1]

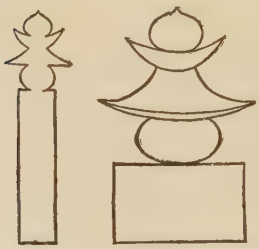
SOTOBA: GO-RIN
(Gravestone)

In the graveyards of Japan are seen two forms of the *sotoba*[2] — one, a stone monument consisting of a cube, a sphere, a pyramid, a crescent, and a pyriform-like body poised with

[1] Christopher Dresser, *Japan: its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*, p. 155.

[2] *Sotoba* is a corruption of the Sanskrit word *stupa*. *Go-rin* means "five-blossomed tomb." For an esoteric explanation, see Lafcadio Hearn's essay, "The Literature of the Dead," in *Exotics and Retrospectives*.

the point upwards; the other, a wooden lath, tall and narrow, notched along the edges, and inscribed with Sanskrit characters. The notches represent the five divisions of the more elaborate monument. The divisions symbolize the five great elements of the ancients; the five elements of which, it is believed, man is made and to which he returns. The cube is the earth; the sphere is water; the pyramid fire; the crescent, air or wind; the *tama*, ether or spirit. According to the doctrines of some of the mystical Buddhist sects, these five elements are also identical with the five Buddhas.



Sotoba

GOJU-NO-TO
(Pagoda)

It was a universal custom, at an early period, for men to raise a dome-shaped tumulus over the ashes of king or saint. In the East, these mounds were called *stupas*, the word meaning "to heap together." As civilization advanced, a casket made of gold, silver, stone, or earthenware was placed inside the *stupa*, and in it were deposited the ashes, fragments of bone, or other relics of the deceased. The *stupa* gradually developed from the simple mound into very elaborate structures of elongated, pyramidal shape.[1] It was often of great height, springing from an octagonal base and consisting of three, seven, nine, or eleven — always an uneven number[2] — umbrella-

[1] See footnote to article, "Umbrella," p. 172.

[2] "The numbers of stories is always odd, because odd numbers are male, while even numbers are female. To benefit a locality the pagoda must have the power of *yang*, the male principle. It is the dark principle *yin* which does mischief." — Joseph Edkins, *Chinese Architecture*, p. 23.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SHARI-TO

shaped tiers, usually ornamented with wind bells. These structures, which are found throughout the Orient, are called "pagodas." The word *pagoda* is a corruption of the Sanskrit *dhatu-garbha*, and the Pali *dagaba*, meaning a receptacle for the sacred elements or relics of the body. Later, pagodas were erected merely as an act of merit.

In the Buddhist conception of the cosmos, a "jeweled pagoda towers upward from the sacred mountain Meru to pierce the loftiest heaven and illuminate the boundless ether with effulgent rays proceeding from the three jewels of the law and the revolving wheel with which it is crowned."[1] The base is four-sided, and represents the abode of the four guardian kings; the center, which is octagonal, represents the Tushita heaven where the eight gods guard the eight points of the compass — this is the abode of the Bodhisats and of Maitreya, the coming Buddha; the upper story is circular and represents the highest heaven, in which the Buddhas reside when they attain complete enlightenment.

TORII

(Temple Gateway)

As an approach to the many temples of Japan, either singly or in long avenues, stand the *torii*, or gateways to the temples. The familiar outline, two upright and two horizontal beams, gives one of the most beautiful and characteristic touches to the landscape.

Torii are made of stone, of wood, and of bronze. Sometimes those of wood are covered with copper or with lacquer highly ornamented. Those in front of the temples of Inari,

[1] S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art*, p. 62.

the Rice God, are always red. One of the most familiar of Japanese art motives is the *torii* which stands knee-deep in the sea before a famous Shinto shrine on the Island of Miyajima.

Torii

Originally, the *torii* stood, in their simplest form, before Shinto shrines, but were later adopted and elaborated by Buddhist builders, and are now used indiscriminately by the adherents of the two faiths.

The word *torii* opens at once a field of discussion as to its derivation and significance. Basil Hall Chamberlain says that—

> the origin both of the word and of the thing is obscure, but that indications deserving consideration point to the probability of both having been brought over from the Asiatic continent. The Koreans erect somewhat similar gateways at the approach to their royal palaces; the Chinese *p'ai lou,* serving to record the virtues of the male and female worthies, seem related in shape as well as use; and the occurrence of the word *turan* in Northern India, and of the word *tari* in Central India, to denote gateways of strikingly cognate appearance, gives matter for reflection. Finally, we have the fundamental fact that almost every Japanese art, and almost every Japanese idea, can be traced back ultimately to the Asiatic mainland, an intellectual dependence so constant as to raise a strong presumption in favor of a Chinese or Buddhist origin for any obscure individual item.[1]

Other authorities give as the derivation of the word *torii*, *tori*, "a bird," and *iru*, "to roost" or "perch." Legend, in describing the first eclipse of the sun, says that when Ama-

[1] B. H. Chamberlain, *Things Japanese,* p. 482; Samuel Tuke, "Notes on the Japanese *Torii,*" *Transactions of the Japan Society,* London, Vol. IV (1895–1898), pp. 82–110.

terasu, the Sun Goddess, after a quarrel with her brother, retired in wrath to a cave and hid her shining countenance from men, causing fear and consternation among her worshipers, the other gods arranged various devices to tempt her from her retreat. They collected cocks before the entrance to her cave and set them all to crowing in order to convince her that day had dawned even without the rising of the sun. Chagrin and curiosity caused the irate goddess to reappear, and a catastrophe was averted. Barnyard fowls were ever after held in high honor and were used as offerings to the gods. A perch or *torii* was erected for their use before the temples, and to this day birds are encouraged to light upon them and to dwell near the temples.

In later centuries, because of its form, the *torii* assumed the rôle of a gateway, and are sometimes placed so that the sun, as it sets, appears to linger for a few moments upon them. It is said that the Sun Goddess comes down to earth at various times and places in the form of a *hō-ō*, or "heavenly phoenix," using the *torii* as her perch.

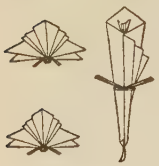
These sacred structures symbolize peace and rest, and the gateway to the true life of grace.

NOSHI

(A Symbol of Humility)

The *noshi*, a folded piece of paper tied with cord, is an accompaniment of every gift, from the most costly present exchanged between friends to the gratuity given to a servant. Originally, a piece of the dried flesh of the *awabi*, a large Japanese abalone, was tied to a gift, though it is probable that in the beginning the dried flesh alone constituted the gift. This curious custom, with modifications, is still current in Japan. It is a symbol of humility, keeping in mind the fact

that the founders of Japan were fishermen and that the products of the sea constituted the chief food of the people. It is believed that if the humble origin of the nation is kept in mind the descendants will strive to emulate the simplicity and frugality of their forefathers.



Noshi

The *noshi* is folded in an elongated form, and tied with cords made of tightly folded paper of red and white — if the occasion be a happy one, of red and gold; if one of mourning, white or black. This cord is called *mizu-hiki*. If one should be without the necessary materials to carry out this custom, the donor simply writes the words *noshi* and *mizu-hiki* on a slip of paper and sends it with the gift.

Noshi are used in the marriage ceremony, and are known then as *cho*, or butterfly *noshi*, being made in the shape of this insect, which is closely associated with the idea of marriage. They represent the *o-cho*, or male butterfly, and the *me-cho*, or female butterfly, and are placed, respectively, in the mouths of the *saké* bottles from which the cups of the bride and bridegroom are filled.[1]

KESA

(Priest's Robe)

The robe of the Buddhist priest, though it may be of the richest brocade or elaborately embroidered, is always made of small pieces of irregular size and shape, sometimes even of different colors, sewn together, simulating the mendings of a worn-out garment. The pieces are symbolic of the rags of humility, in accordance with the vows of poverty made by the priest on taking up his vocation.

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[1] P. E. Schiller, "Japanische Geschenksitten," *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, IX (1903), pp. 343–358.

An entirely different reason for the custom is, however, given by good authorities. "It is a peculiarity of the official [priest's] habit that robes should be made out of patches imitating the rice fields of Magadha." Ananda, the favorite disciple of Gautama, was said to be the first who made such a robe. The number of patches varies with the different sects.[1]

FUKUSA
(Gift-Cloth)

One of the most charming bits of etiquette current in Japan when etiquette was of paramount importance, was the use of the *fukusa*, or gift-cloth. These squares of satin or crepe were placed around even the simplest gift; they were duly admired by the recipient, and courteously returned to the sender.

The *fukusa* were decorated with crests, symbols, *Nō* masks, and various scenes from history and legend; sometimes, the decoration suggested the season or the occasion on which the gift was sent. The designs were often done by the most famous artists. Celebrated *fukusa* bearing Hokusai's signature are in some of the finest European collections.

Gift-cloths were part of the trousseau of every bride of high degree, and are possessed in large numbers by the old families.

TENUGUI
(Towel)

The small Japanese hand-towels may be included in a list of symbolic objects, not only because many of the varied and beautiful designs found upon these narrow strips of cotton are of symbolic import, but because every temple is provided with

[1] J. H. C. Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 80.

a towel-rack on which hang the temple towels. These towels are usually about twelve by eighteen inches, and are blue, white, or copper-colored; they are ornamented with Chinese hieroglyphics; they are hemmed at top and bottom, a narrow bamboo rod is run through the top hem, and a string is attached with which to hang them up. They are used by priest and worshiper after rinsing the mouth or for drying the hands after the use of holy water.

The use of the ordinary hand-towel is —

almost as old as the art of weaving itself. For hundreds of years it has proved handkerchief, towel, headkerchief, and sometimes sole garment and covering of the Japanese workman. Every field laborer wears one tied around his head, from an old superstition that it imparts strength, and also from the belief that it prevents sunstroke. Every *riksha* coolie carries it wrapped about his wrist for obvious convenience; he may discard, one by one as the season advances, every garment he possesses, but never the towel, whose use is to wipe at frequent intervals his dripping face and body. The actor of a hundred years ago wore it twisted around his head in picturesque fashion, as a badge of his calling; and it is from this habit of the actor that design came to be used upon it.[1]

MOCHI
(Rice-Cakes)

Mochi, the round rice-cakes used as offerings, are an example of the diversity of symbolic meanings sometimes woven around one object.

At New Year's time, in every household, these cakes are made; they are prepared, according to prescribed rules, from a very glutinous kind of rice, in the form of disks, and are placed in piles on the altars of the shrines. They represent

[1] Anna Heard Dyer, "The Art of Design as Exhibited in the Hand-towel of Japan," *The Craftsman*, VIII (1905), p. 223.

the round mirror by which the Sun Goddess was tempted from her cave.

A seeming contradiction is the story of the hare that lives in the moon and pounds rice in his mortar to make into cakes. The idea of the hare in the moon is derived from the continent, but the rice-cakes are native and may have their origin in the words *mochi* and *mochi-zuki*, meaning, respectively, "rice-cake," and "full moon."

SUMI
(Charcoal)

Charcoal is of great economic value in Japan. It is burned exclusively in the *hibachi*, or braziers, both for heating and cooking.

It is one of the New Year's symbols, signifying "prosperous changelessness." As its color cannot be changed, it expresses the hope that the fortunes of one's friends will remain, in all that gives happiness, forever unchanged.

FUJI-NO-YAMA
(The Sacred Mountain)

The most beautiful sight in Japan, and certainly one of the most beautiful in the world, is the distant apparition of Fuji on cloudless days. . . . . Rising to a height of nearly 12,500 feet, Fuji is visible from thirteen provinces of the empire. Nevertheless it is one of the easiest of lofty mountains to climb, and for a thousand years it has been scaled every summer by a multitude of pilgrims. For it is not only a sacred mountain,[1] but the most sacred mountain of Japan — the holiest eminence

[1] "Each nation called its sacred mountain 'the navel of the earth,' for not only was it the supposed center of the habitable world, but through it, as the foetus through the umbilical cord, the earth drew her increase." — Daniel G. Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, p. 103.

of the land that is called divine, the Supreme Altar of the Sun — and to ascend it at least once in a lifetime is the duty of all who reverence the ancient gods. . . . . By both of the national religions Fuji is held in reverence. The Shinto deity of Fuji is the beautiful goddess Ko-no-hana-saku-ya-hime, she who brought forth her children in fire without pain, and whose name signifies "Radiant-blooming-as-the-flowers-of-the-trees," or, according to some commentators, "Causing-the-flowers-to-bloom-brightly." On the summit is her temple; and in ancient books it is recorded that mortal eyes have beheld her hovering, like a luminous cloud, above the verge of the crater. Her viewless servants watch and wait by the precipices to hurl down whomsoever presumes to approach her shrine with unpurified heart. . . . . Buddhism loves the grand peak because its form is like the white bud of the Sacred Flower — and because the eight cusps of its top, like the eight petals of the lotus, symbolize the Eight Intelligences of Perception, Purpose, Speech, Conduct, Living, Effort, Mindfulness, and Contemplation.[1]

Fuji-no-yama and Lake Biwa, the Lake of the Lute, were born in a single night after days of terror caused by volcanic disturbances. This phenomenon has impressed the simple minds of the people with awe and reverence, and Fuji has become a symbol of success in life and of triumph over obstacles. To dream on New Year's eve of Fuji, especially when combined with two falcons and three egg-plants, is considered the most lucky of all dreams.

HORAI OR HORAIZAN
(An Island of Paradise)

Horai or Horaizan (Chinese, Phenglai) is a Taoist conception. It is the name of one of the three islands of the paradise of everlasting life, which were believed to be in the

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Exotics and Retrospectives,* pp. 3–4.

ocean east of China. On it dwell the genii of everlasting life, and a legend —

probably of Taoist cast, relates that Süfuh or Hsüfuh (Japanese, Jofuku[1]), a magician of Tshi (Shantung), was sent during the reign of Hsihwang, the founder of the Chinese empire, with a band of youths and maidens in search of these Blessed Isles, where grows the magic *che* plant, and wells forth the fount of sweet wine that bestows immortality upon the drinker. It is upon the seeds of the *che,* and upon the gems that bestrew the island meads, that the genii subsist.[2]

Horai is represented as a mountain, rugged and rocky — often placed upon the back of a tortoise. In Japanese gardens it appears, usually, as an arrangement of six rocks. The crane, the stag, and the tortoise are said to dwell on Horai, and the plum, the pine, the peach, and the fungus grow in great profusion on its rocky shores.

O'er Horai's peak have flown a thousand years, a thousand autumn's have come and gone, a myriad years have passed —
There in the pine-groves still build the cranes their nests —
There disport themselves the tortoises about the high rocks.[3]

SHICHIYO
(The Seven Luminaries)

On one of the earliest stone carvings of the Han dynasty is a curious representation of the Shichiyo, the seven luminaries of the Chinese heavens. The simple form — seven circles connected by short, straight lines — is occasionally seen on Chinese and Japanese art works.

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[1] Jofuku is usually depicted riding on a crane.
[2] F. V. Dickins, *Primitive and Mediaeval Japanese Texts,* p. 338, note 1.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 397.

The seven luminaries or controllers[1] were the sun, moon, and five stars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury. The sun governed life and time, and presided over the male or vital principle; the moon governed work and place, and presided over the female or functional principle; the five stars corresponded to the five principal things: Saturn governed earth; Jupiter, wood; Mars, fire; Venus, metal; Mercury, water.

Shichiyo

SUN AND MOON

The worship of the sun is important in its connection with Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, and as an independent worship, called Otentō-sama. If the sun is hidden by clouds for a longer period than usual, the people rush from their homes when it reappears in the heavens and, with their faces turned reverently toward the west, repeat prayers before the great luminary.

The myth of the sun being inhabited by a three-legged crow, Yangwu, comes from China; but Amaterasu is credited with possessing an eight-handed crow, Yatagarasu, which she presented to Jimmu Tennō, Japan's first emperor, as a guide for some of his famous expeditions. A noble Japanese family claimed descent from this bird.

The sun is frequently drawn rising above the ocean — as the sun is never-changing and the ocean is ever-changing.

[1] The old Chinese term for the seven luminaries signifies "controllers," which corresponds to the Hebrew word *Shemayim*, translated "the heavens." The early people of the East believed that the planets were, under God, the controllers of human destiny, and that they influenced the seasons of the produce of Nature.

Yo and In, the male and female principles of Nature, are thus symbolized.

The moon is believed to be inhabited by a hare, which pounds rice for the offering-cakes; there is a fancied resemblance between the form of the animal and the outline of the visible marks in the moon.

The crescent moon is loved and worshiped each time it appears, and is considered a lucky omen; as a curve of perfect shape it gives its name to the eyebrows of fair women — *mikatsuki mansiye.* The greatest nights of the lunar year are in the autumn, the first quarter of the seventh, eighth, and ninth months; on these occasions the tea-houses are gay with lights and music, *saké* is drunk, and verses composed. The fifteenth night of the eighth month — our harvest moon — is celebrated with offerings of beans and dumplings, bunches of *eulalia* grass, and *lespedeza* blossoms. This moon is called the "bean" moon. On the thirteenth night of the ninth moon the same offerings are made, with the addition of chestnuts; it is called the "chestnut" moon.

JU-NI SHI
(Zodiac)

The zodiac, a division of the heavens into constellations which were believed to exercise an influence over certain divisions of time, probably originated two thousand years before Christ among the Chaldeans. It was brought to India through Greece, and thence to China and Japan. It has ever held a curiously important place in the ancient philosophies.

The constellations of the zodiac were each named after a different animal, which were in turn represented by signs. The zodiac of the Chinese is analogous, not only to that of

the Chaldeans, but also to that of the Occident. The Japanese have simply adopted the Chinese ideas.

The animals of the Japanese zodiac are: *ne*, the rat (*ne* is a short form of *nezumi*, "rat"); *ushi*, the ox; *tora*, the tiger; *u*, the hare (*u* is a short form of *usagi*); *tatsu*, the dragon; *mi*, the serpent (*mi* is a short form of *hebi*); *uma*, the horse; *hitsuji*, the goat; *saru*, the monkey; *tori*, the cock; *inu*, the dog; and *i*, the boar.

NAMI
(Waves)

Decoratively and poetically the breaking waves form one of the most beautiful motives found in the art of Japan. The idea is borrowed directly from Korea and expresses the Korean phrase, "unnumbered laughings, ten thousand flashings of blue waves." The wave design is beautifully used on roof-tiles and ridge-poles, suggesting protection from fire. On the end of ridge-poles on the thatched houses in the country, the Chinese character for water is sometimes deeply cut. This is also a protective measure against the dread destroyer. In Japanese drawings the sea-birds and, sometimes, the hairy tortoise, are added to a wave motive.

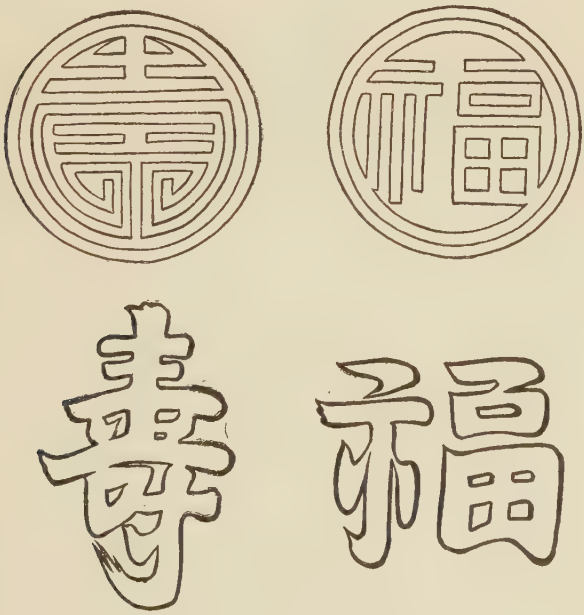
MANAKO
(Fish Roe)

In the early life of Japan, the people depended largely upon the sea for their livelihood. A great love and understanding of it is shown in both the art and poetry of the Empire. Among the oldest designs is the well-known "wave-pattern," the fish-scale diaper, and the *manako*, or fish-roe ground. The fish scale is one of the most frequently used diapers both in China and Japan. The fish roe was introduced

at an early date into metal and porcelain work; it is a peculiar ground of raised dots.

KOTO-BUKI
(Long Life and Happiness)

There are many different ways of drawing the characters that express longevity and happiness; they form an oft-repeated art motive.



Different forms of Koto-Buki

Part Five

FESTIVALS AND CEREMONIES

PART V

FESTIVALS AND CEREMONIES

Decorative symbols play a most important part in our festivals, and whoever wishes to know anything of our popular life and feeling must first learn something at least of the signification of the most common among our festival symbols and tokens. Such knowledge is especially indispensable to the student of Japanese art.[1]

FESTIVALS

It has been said that under the old conditions of society in Japan there was a festival for every day in the year. This is easy to believe, for the Japanese were a pleasure-seeking, beauty-loving people, and the ever-recurring seasons when favorite blossoms were in bloom were made the excuse for various festivities; and an intense patriotism caused the birthday or other anniversary of each emperor and hero to be chosen as a time for celebration. It is, therefore, impossible to give, in a limited space, even a list of the festivals of old Japan, but some few of those most frequently represented in art by significant groupings of plants and other objects, will be briefly mentioned. Many of the most important festivals were held on the odd days of the odd months of the year, for these were believed to personify the male or active principle in Nature, and were therefore considered propitious.

The New Year festival was, and still is, the principal occasion for rejoicing. On the eve of the New Year — known

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[1] Jiro Harada, "*Gosekku:* the Five Festivals of the Seasons in Japan," *Transactions of the Japan Society,* pp. 182–204.

as Ganjitsu — the *shime-nawa* or straw rope is drawn around each home to prevent the entrance of all evil spirits, and to keep inside all that is good. To the *shime-nawa* are attached the familiar New Year objects of symbolic import: the lobster, the fern, the orange, the leaves of the *yuzuriha*, strips of seaweed, and the *gohei*. Within the house, smaller *shime-nawa*, with their accompanying objects — lobster, fern, seaweed, *gohei* — are hung before the household shrine, and *mochi* (rice-cakes) are placed as offerings on the *kami-dana*, or deity-shelf. Conspicuous among the New Year customs is the Kado-matsu or Gate-pine Festival, which dates back a thousand years. It consists in selecting two pine trees, one representing the male and one the female, and placing them on either side of the gateway or door of the home or temple. From the first to the third of January — San-ga-nichi, the three days of New Year — a stew made of rice-cakes and greens is eaten; presents are exchanged; games such as the Shishi Mai or Lion's Dance, and Oibane-kobane, battledore and shuttlecock, are indulged in, and many interesting and curious customs are maintained.

Setsubun is a movable feast, sometimes late in January and sometimes early in February, on the eve of the first days of spring. Beans are scattered about the house in the belief that they will frighten away evil spirits.

On the third day of the third month is held the Hina-matsuri, the feast of the girls, or, as it is sometimes styled, the feast of dolls. Dolls beautifully dressed, often representing historical personages, are given as presents, and are used to decorate the houses. *Saké*, served in diminutive *saké* bottles and cups, is almost universally drunk. The cherry tree is the special plant of this festival, but the peach blossom, symbolizing marriage, is also used.

The eighth of April is the birthday of the Buddha, Tanjo-no-Shaka. Images of the infant Buddha are set up in the temples, and *ama-cha,* a kind of sweet tea made of liquorice, is poured over them. It is a time of great rejoicing, and probably replaces an older festival of spring and the birth of the year.

The Boys' Festival, Tango-no-Sekku, is celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth month. Boys are presented with miniature suits of armor, swords, banners, and other military equipments, and stirring tales of ancient heroes are told to them, that their ambition may thus be excited. Large carp, made of paper or of cloth, are hung upon poles in front of the homes; they are made so that the wind inflates them and gives them a wonderfully lifelike appearance. This fish, the symbol of perseverance, suggests to the growing youth the idea that as the carp swims up the river against the current, so will the sturdy boy, overcoming all obstacles, make his way in the world and rise to fame. The *ayame,* a species of iris, is the flower dedicated to this festival.

Tanabata-no-setsu, held on the seventh day of the seventh month, was inspired by a fable of Chinese origin. This tells of the stars Kengiu, the Herdsman, and Shokujō, the Weaving Girl, two lovers who dwell on either side of the Celestial River (the Milky Way) and meet upon its banks but once a year, on the seventh night of the seventh month. This event is celebrated by mortals with music and poetry. Poems are written on square or oblong pieces of paper and attached to bamboo branches. This is often depicted.

The Festival of Bon, the Buddhist All Souls', commonly called the Feast of Lanterns, is celebrated from the thirteenth to the sixteenth of July. The spirits of the dead are believed to visit their former homes. The graveyards are decked with

lanterns, and the *Shōryō-bune*, or ships of the dead, are also festooned with lanterns and set adrift upon the water.

Chōyō-no-setsu, the Festival of Happiness, is held on the ninth of October in honor of the blooming of the chrysanthemum, the Imperial Flower, which is in the full glory of its beauty at this season. It is a simple celebration of a Nature-loving people; outdoor parties are held and the gorgeous blossoms enjoyed, the petals being scattered in the *saké* that is drunk on these occasions.

There are many ceremonies in Japan, among which the wedding ceremony and the birth and funeral rites are probably the most important. The Tea Ceremony is, however, the one most intimately associated with art and symbolism, and for that reason is here chosen for description. On the ceremonies generally, the reader is referred to Mitford's *Tales of Old Japan* for information.

CHA-NO-YU
(Tea Ceremony)

Tea began as a medicine and grew into a beverage. In China, in the eighth century, it entered the realm of poetry as one of the polite amusements. The fifteenth century saw Japan ennoble it into a religion of aestheticism — Teaism. Teaism is a cult founded on the adoration of the beautiful among the sordid facts of everyday existence. . . . . The long isolation of Japan from the rest of the world, so conducive to introspection, has been highly favorable to the development of Teaism. Our home and habits, costume and cuisine, porcelain, lacquer, painting — all have been subject to its influence. No student of Japanese culture could ever ignore its presence[1]

for Cha-no-yu is perhaps the most subtly Japanese of all ceremonies. It is responsible for many a beautiful tea-bowl

[1] Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea*, p. 3.

and teapot and cup, and several of the utensils used during the ceremony are frequently depicted on Japanese art objects.

Elaborate rules which must be observed are set forth at length in Japanese books. The tea-parties were, in the first instance, held in the open air, on a veranda facing some retired part of the garden, and the space where the guests sat was enclosed by screens.[1]

The size of this space was governed by the number of straw mats used — four and one-half being the correct number: four not only suggesting death, but an even number is never used if avoidable, for it represents the weak or female principle In, and is not considered auspicious.

The number of guests was fixed at the celestial number of five. At a subsequent period, special rooms in the house were set apart for the purpose, and a small garden would be arranged so as to resemble as closely as possible a natural landscape, to give the idea of the feeling of peaceful seclusion which has always been associated with the ceremony. When the guests assembled the house was kept entirely quiet, the servants being sent away, and the master of the house himself waiting upon the guests and preparing the tea. The former, leaving their swords outside the house, would be welcomed by the master, who would arrange the various utensils required. While he prepared the tea with water boiled the previous day, the guests were allowed to inspect the various implements — the box containing perfumes to be thrown upon the charcoal fire, the tea-bowls, etc. The tea used was in powder, and was prepared both as a thick and as a thin beverage, and most minute and exact instructions are set forth for its preparation. All the various implements had their prescribed uses set forth, and when the tea was made, it was drunk in accordance with rules which were observed with the greatest exactitude. When the host had prepared the beverage, the principal guest approached and received the cup from him; this he

[1] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery*, pp. 20–22.

carried to his place, expressing respectful thanks to the master for the honour done him, and at the same time apologizing to the assembled Chajin for taking the first sip; he would then admire the colour and consistency of the tea, and, after quietly and thoughtfully tasting it two or three times, pass it on to his neighbour. In this way the cup passed from Chajin to Chajin, until it was returned to the hand of the master. The cup would then be passed around for inspection, and its beauties discussed and admired, and again returned to the master, who would place it in the bag from which it was taken. It would be tedious to recount the multitudinous rules and points of etiquette involved in the proper observance of Cha-no-yu, but some idea of them may be gathered from a perusal of the list of the implements and utensils used.[1]

1. Kettle, *Kama.*
2. Stove for burning charcoal, *Furo.*
3. Holder for lid of kettle, *Futaoki.*
4. Finger napkin, *Fukusa.*
5. Kettle lifter, *Kwan.*
6. Tea cloth, *Chakin.*
7. Tea jar, *Chaire.*
8. Cover for jar, *Chaire-no-fukuro.*
9. Hot water ladle, *Hishaku.*
10. Water jug, *Midzusashi.*
11. Ash shovel, *Haisukui.*
12. Ash box, *Haihoroku.*
13. Kettle stand, *Gotoku.*
14. Whisk for stirring tea, *Chasen.*
15. Tea bowl, *Chawan.*
16. Teaspoon, *Chashaku.*
17. Teaspoon case, *Chashaku-dsutsu.*
18. Slop basin, *Midzukoboshi.*
19. Mat for the kettle, *Kama-shiki.*
20. Perfume box, *Kogo.*
21. Feather brush, *Haboki.*
22. Charcoal basket, *Sumitori.*
23. Poker, *Hibashi.*
24. Stand for the stove, *Robuchi.*
25. Stand for water ladle, *Chikkei.*
26. Stand for water ladle, *Tankei.*
27. Fan, *Uchiwa.*
28. Water ladle, *Midzushaka.*
29. Hot water pitcher, *Yukwan.*
30. Saucer, *Chataku.*
31. Teapot, *Chabin.*
32. Tea scoop, *Chasaji.*

[1] J. L. Bowes, *Japanese Pottery*, pp. 20–22.

Part Six

GARDEN AND FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

PART VI

GARDEN AND FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

THE JAPANESE GARDEN

Japanese landscape-gardening is one of the fine arts. Ever since the middle of the fifteenth century, generations of artists have been busy perfecting it, elaborating and refining over and over again the principles handed down by their predecessors, until it has come to be considered a mystery as well as an art, and is furnished — not to say encumbered — with a vocabulary more complicated and recondite than any one who has not pursued some of the native treatises on the subject can well imagine. There is a whole set of names for different sorts of garden lanterns, another for water-basins, another for fences (one authority enumerates nineteen kinds of screen fences alone), another — and this is a very important subject — for those large stones, which, according to Japanese ideas, constitute the skeleton of the whole composition. Then, too, there are rules for every detail; and different schools of the art or science of gardening have rules diametrically opposed to each other. For instance, larger trees are planted and larger hills made by one school in the front portion of a garden, and smaller ones in the further portions, with the object of exaggerating the perspective and thus making the garden look bigger than it really is. Another school teaches the direct contrary. Suggestion is largely used, as when part of a small lake is so adroitly hidden as to give the idea of greater size in the part unseen, or as when a meander of pebbles is made to represent a river bed. Everything, in fact, has a reason — generally an abstruse reason. Gardens are supposed to be capable of symbolizing abstract ideas, such as peace, chastity, old age, etc. The following passage will show how the garden of a certain Buddhist abbot is made to convey the idea of the

power of divine truth "This garden consists almost entirely of stones arranged in a fanciful and irregular manner in a small enclosure, the sentiment expressed depending for its value upon acquaintance with the following Buddhist legend, somewhat reminding us of the story of St. Francis and the birds. A certain monk Daita, ascending a hillock and collecting stones, began to preach to them the secret precepts of Buddha, and so miraculous was the effect of the wondrous truths which he told that even the lifeless stones bowed in reverent assent. Thereupon the saint placed them upon the ground around him, and consecrated them as the Nodding Stones."[1]

IKE-BANA
(Floral Arrangement)

According to old and strict rules, the simplest bouquet for temple or home was not only of symbolic import in its arrangement, but in its choice of flowers, shrubs, or branches which were appropriate to the season or to the festival or ceremony of the moment. Familiar combinations of plants, such as the *shō-chiku-bai* and the *shi kunshi*, were also used. Flower vases of infinite variety and simple beauty were made by the famous potters, and the greatest artists delighted in the study and practice of floral arrangement.[2] It is an art based on a philosophy, and certain traditions are handed down in the various flower schools. There are fundamental rules governing the construction of all bouquets — these are, of course, modified to suit the taste of the designer and the kind of plants used.

Formerly, the style known as Rikka was stiff and formal in

[1] B. H. Chamberlain, *Things Japanese*, p. 206. See also Josiah Conder, *The Art of Landscape Gardening in Japan*, and Florence Du Cane, *The Flowers and Gardens of Japan.*

[2] This subject has been treated here in merest outline, as there is much easily obtainable literature upon it; see Josiah Conder, *The Flowers of Japan and the Art of Floral Arrangement;* Mary Averill, *Japanese Flower Arrangement;* Mary Averill, *The Flower Art of Japan.*

character, and the flowers were placed upright. This school is still adhered to in flower offerings to the gods. Succeeding this method came the Ike-Nobo arrangement, which, though formal, is pleasing and is in vogue for marriage ceremonies. Next was introduced, four hundred years ago, another style, known as the Higashi-yama, followed by the great school of Enshu, which is the most popular and most beautiful of all the many flower arrangements of Japan, and although there are other schools, they differ in detail, rather than in principle, from the great Enshu school. Here the flowers and branches are arranged and shaped with the thumb and third finger of the right hand. The active and passive principles of Nature are carefully considered, and three main stems or branches form the basis of its law: Chi is the Earth branch; Jin, the Human; and Ten, Heaven. Chi is the lowest, Ten, the highest, and Jin is between the two. Ten is placed in the center, Chi on one side and Jin on the other. This simple, symbolic scheme is often developed into a more elaborate and complicated symbolism, but simplicity of outline is always adhered to.

In the Cha-no-yu (Tea Ceremony) the arrangement is known as the Nage-komi method, and is characterized by extreme simplicity and absence of formality.

Sometimes an artificial lake or mountain, or a miniature garden, is made in a low flat dish, and trees and shrubs are placed in studied irregularity — the symbolism of garden arrangement receiving close attention. This is called Hako-niwa.

Carefully arranged floral combinations often form the decorations on pottery, embroideries, and lacquers.

Part Seven

CRESTS

PART VII

CRESTS[1]

(Mons)

As with most customs, the practice of using some distinctive mark of identification by different tribes or families may be traced back to uncivilized man and to the beginnings of history. Tattoo marks, distinctive costumes, totems, and seals all antedate heraldry proper. The bull of the Cretans, the raven of Denmark, the white horse of Saxony, the lion of Britain, the eagle of the United States are well-known examples of national symbols; and besides, each tribe, clan, and family had its different badge. It was in Europe, during the Middle Ages, however, in the days of feudalism, that heraldry, in its generally accepted meaning, came into being, and most elaborate and fanciful designs have grown out of it.

In Japan, crests, or, more correctly, badges, are of a much more simple character; in fact, no such thing as a coat of arms proper has ever been found there. This may be due to the fact that —

The shield, on which, in Europe, the arms of the bearer were blazoned, has never been in vogue in Japan. The only piece of defensive armor at all resembling it, used in Japanese warfare, was a large screen of wood, fixed in an upright position by a movable rest at the back so as to form a protection for archers. The smaller shield for the arm would have proved a serious encumbrance to a warrior, as the long Japanese sword is two-

[1] For a detailed account of Japanese Crests see R. Lange, "Japanische Wappen," *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen*, 1903, VI, pp. 63–281. *Illustrated.*

handed. Thus, then, the only place where the distinguishing mark could be borne was either on the helmet, or on the breast-plate, and in this way crests and badges are the only heraldic insignia known in Japan.[1]

This deficiency, however, has partly been remedied by the use of flags and banners.

As in Europe, Japanese heraldry reached its highest development during feudal times. How or when crests were first used is unknown, but it is undoubtedly true that a kind of rude heraldry existed in Japan far earlier than 900 A. D.

Popular tradition says that it took its origin in the pattern embroidered upon or woven into the state garments of the old court nobles at Kyōto, and in support of this theory there is adduced the fact that the Chinese character used in writing to express the word *mon* is a compound of two other characters signifying "thread-pattern" or "thread-writing." (The Chinese character for *mon* means design or pattern.) The embroidered patterns alluded to were generally circular, and hence it comes to pass that nearly all Japanese heraldic devices are more or less circular in shape.

This explanation is probably of little value, accounting perhaps for the term *mon*, but not for the custom, for beginnings are usually of a more simple and natural order; and according to some of the ancient writers, crests or *mons* appeared first on wagons, lanterns, etc., before they were woven into cloth.

The importance which was attached in early times to crests is shown in an old proverb:

When the question of legitimacy or illegitimacy arises about a newly born child, one needs but to wash off the placenta in water,

[1] Thomas R. H. McClatchie, "Japanese Heraldry," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, v (1876), p. 2.

when, if the child is legitimate, the family crest will appear thereon.

Japanese heraldry is in origin and development quite independent of China and the rest of the Asiatic continent, and there is perhaps no other country where crests are used as frequently and consistently in daily life as in Japan. And though they were often conferred as marks of honor, they are by no means a mark of aristocracy. Men, women, and children of all classes wear them upon their garments, and nearly every article of common use is also marked — household utensils, carriages, fittings of the sword, traveling boxes, the lacquered hat, lanterns, tiles of the houseroofs, *fukusa*, even towels! The only place from which the *mon* was omitted was on the wedding robes, the *hara-kiri* garments, and the mourning robes.

It was, and still is by those wearing native costume, worn upon five places on the upper garment, one at the back of the neck, one on each sleeve, and one on each breast. Sometimes there were two upon the collar and one on the margin of the gown, making seven in all. There are a few exceptional cases recorded — the family Tamura, for example, carried eight family crests, two of these for natural sons, one for dependent relatives! When from the ancestral house another branch of the family came into being, the family crest, slightly altered, was assigned; so that, as in Europe, several families of the same name carry the same or similar crests.

An example of how a simple incident can become the origin of a later incomprehensible custom is mentioned by Rikyō, a celebrated author who died in 1758. He said:

Until the time of my youth there were to be found *Shinobojochin* [dark paper lanterns], which were used by the higher classes on secret night errands to the tea houses, etc. On these lanterns was placed a crest entirely different from the family crest

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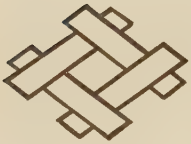

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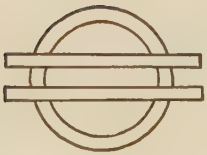

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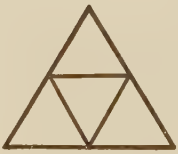

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JAPANESE CRESTS

1. *Crest of Niwa family.*
2. *Breaking waves.*
3. *Outline of mountain.*
4. *Well fence.*
5. *Arrows.*
6. *Sail of boat.*
7. *Falcon feathers.*
8. *Two cranes. Crest of Nambu family.*
9. *Chinese character for ten.*
10. *Chopsticks and bowl. Crest of Narita family.*
11. *Dragon scales. Crest of Benten, also of Hojo family.*
12. *Two butterflies.*

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JAPANESE CRESTS

13. Wild goose.
14. Wild goose.
15. Gentian.
16. A species of hop.
17. Wood sorrel.
18. Ivy.
19. Zinziber.
20. Oak leaves.
21. Mallow leaves.
22. Tea fruit.
23. Water plant.
24. Orchid.

so that the bearer could not be recognized! This custom spread, and finally everyone used an alternative crest on the lantern.

Most of the *daimyos* possessed three different *mons*, while those of lower rank had but two, and the ordinary samurai one.

When three were used, one was termed *jo-mon*, or fixed badge of the family, the others being the subordinate crests. The *rae-mon*, or badges, were worn instead of the chief one, and were used on occasions when it was not absolutely necessary to appear in full dress.

At first a difference was made in the size of the *mon* according to the rank of the wearer. Those of the nobles and officials of high position were no less than three inches in diameter, while subordinate officers and persons of lower rank used smaller ones, down to ordinary citizens, merchants, and manufacturers, in whose case the diameter could be but one inch. In later times, however, the *mon* worn by anyone was seldom larger than an inch, except when blazoned on flags or on breastplates.

As a general rule the Japanese do not adhere to any strict laws regarding the combination of metals and tinctures observed in western lands. They care but little how often the color of their symbol is altered, provided only that the general outline of the device be preserved.

In time of war, the soldiers in Japan always fought in full armor, and then the crest or badge was, of course, a conspicuous mark whereby to distinguish friend from foe in the battle field. When in full armor, and his face covered with the iron mask, the warrior was completely disguised, and it was, accordingly, all-important that he should carry his cognizance prominently displayed. It was, of course, displayed on his breastplate, and a small device was worn on the front of the helmet; but these would not be conspicuous enough to distinguish him in the thick of battle. He accordingly adopted a

method of carrying his badge which not only gave it the proper prominence, but served also to mark his progress in the fight and to inspire his followers. Attached to the back of his suit of armor was a small sheath, from which arose a rod of considerable height above his head. On the top of the rod was a piece fixed at right angles, and attached thereto and to the upright rod was a flag (*sashimono*) bearing the *mon* of the wearer. The *mon* also appeared on the flags carried by his retainers, and upon the curtains, usually fastened to upright posts so as to form an enclosure around his encampment. The *mons* of the *daimyos* were noted down with such accuracy in the lists of nobles that by the insignia of a train or retinue on any highroad the name and the rank of its lord could be at once determined.

Of so great importance was this deemed in a country where etiquette required the observance of various details of ceremony, when two nobles and their followers met on the road, that there were generally placed in the van of every procession two or three well-informed retainers, whose special duty it was to take note of the insignia of any train coming from an opposite direction and pass word down their own ranks as to the due ceremony to be observed under the circumstances.[1]

Mons were assumed at will by anyone wishing to select for himself or for his family some distinguishing mark, usually to recall some incidents in the history of the family or individual carrying them, but sometimes only a particular fancy was gratified — some favorite plant or animal, some simple geometrical figure, a stripe, a cross, a square, or even an old Chinese character, such as the character for ten placed in a circle. This latter resembled a horse's bit and was afterwards

[1] Thomas R. H. McClatchie, "Japanese Heraldry," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, v (1876), p. 7.

associated with it. Natural objects such as the sun, moon, running water, breaking waves, a mountain peak, were occasionally chosen. Ladders, wheels, fences, water-pipes, cash, arrows, hats, gateways, etc., were used. Sometimes as many as twenty-five variations of some of these subjects may be found in Japanese books of crests.

Play upon words is frequently to be met with in all Japanese symbolism, and many interesting examples are found in heraldry. Thus the celebrated family Tachibana had the orange (*tachibana*) as their crest; the Daimyo Torii used a gateway (*torii*) in various forms; the Fujiwara family had the wistaria (*fuji*). One of the crests of the Daimyo Kuroda is an opaque circle, probably in allusion to *kuro* (black). Matsuda used the pine (*matsu*), and families of which *yama* (mountain) formed part of the name used an outline of a mountain.

No portion of the human figure is ever used, and quadrupeds rarely. The well-known black horse tethered to two stakes belonged to the Soma family, and was used also as a pottery mark. As the nobility became more and more established, *mons* were conferred by rulers and chieftains on their nobles and retainers if they had distinguished themselves by bravery in fight, or for some other deed or merit.

A story is told of Naozane, one of the chief retainers of the Minamoto family. In 1181, during a battle, he concealed Yoritomo in a hollow tree. The latter's enemies, coming close upon him, even thrust their bows into the tree, but two wood pigeons flew forth "clapping their wings loudly." The pursuers, on seeing the birds, gave up the idea that anyone was concealed in the tree and abandoned the pursuit. As a reward for this service to the famous Yoritomo, Naozane received a *mon* made up of two pigeons with a branch of mistletoe.

The family of Niwa took for themselves a *mon* in the form of the letter X, because after killing many of his adversaries Niwa wiped the blood from his sword, according to Japanese custom, upon the left knee of his trousers, and found when the battle was over that the stain upon his garments was in the form of the letter X.

The Nambu family used two cranes. The following story is told: Before a battle a number of generals met on the field and held a feast at which *saké* was drunk. Suddenly two cranes flew over them and touched the *saké* with their wings. As the Nambu side was victorious in the battle that followed, the family took two cranes as a symbol of luck and used them as a crest.

The badge borne by a family named Narita represents two parallel lines drawn through a circle and extending for some distance beyond the circumference. The founder of this family was once engaged in one of the frequent wars on the eastern marshes of Japan, and, his provisions having failed, was put to great straits to obtain food, a battle being imminent at the time. Casting his eye around, he espied a small shrine, and, entering this, found laid therein, as an offering, a bowl of rice and a pair of chopsticks. The pangs of hunger overcame his religious scruples, he seized the bowl, devoured the rice, and, refreshed by this timely sustenance, went forth and bore himself gallantly in the fight. In it he earned considerable distinction, and, ascribing this to the favor of the deity whose shrine he had invaded, he took for his badge the circle and two lines, as a rough delineation of the rice bowl and chopsticks.

Three dragon scales are used by the Hojo family, for a dragon appeared in a dream to the first regent of this dynasty and left with him three scales. Benten has also this crest.

The Tokugawa *mon*, three marshmallow leaves, was adopted according to the following story: In the year 1529, Kiyoyasu,

father of the famous Iyeyasu (a prominent member of the Tokugawa family), returning from a successful expedition against the eastern portion of the province of Mikawa, was entertained by one of his vassals named Honda Masatada at the latter's castle of Ina. During the feast Honda presented his lord with fish from the pool, which he laid upon three leaves of the mallow and placed upon a small wooden stand. Kyoyasu, observing the leaves, exclaimed, "Upon my return in triumph I have received these leaves, from henceforth I will adopt them as my badge."

The imperial crests are two in number — the sixteen-petaled chrysanthemum and the *kiri* (*paulownia imperialis*).

The *kiri mon* is formed of a leaf and three flowers, each of the latter consisting of a slender stem with buds attached. The central stem bears seven buds and those on each side five each.

Many families other than the royal house bear this crest, but as a general rule the buds are but five in number on the central stem and three on each of the others. This law, however, is not closely observed. Legend says that the *kiri* was chosen as the crest of the emperor because the *hō-ō* bird, symbol of imperial might, chose to nest in its branches.

When considering the chrysanthemum as the imperial crest we encounter a maze of speculation.

It has been stated by more than one authority that originally the sun and its rays were intended, and not the chrysanthemum, but some of the old native writers tell of early emperors who, according to Buddhist custom, retired from public life, sometimes abdicating the throne forever to go into the mountains and dwell as hermits. Growing around the humble dwellings of these holy men were the simple blossoms of the mountain chrysanthemum, very unlike the showy flowers of today, and not unlike the modest daisy. The lore of strength-

giving herbs was part of the daily thoughts of these voluntary exiles, and the belief that the petals of the chrysanthemum had strength-giving, life-giving powers made it a highly valued plant, much sought after by world-weary monarchs. Thus it was that it became inseparably associated with the early Mikados, drawn always, at first, in its simple, eight-petaled form.

The use of crests for decorative purposes, except in very modern times, was not customary. The practice of using the chrysanthemum crest of the Mikado was in vogue for a short time during the seventeenth century, but was in contravention of the law and was discontinued after the principal offender, Tommura, was compelled to commit *hara-kiri.*

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